Christian Religion Studies
Class Eight
National Curriculum and Textbook Board, Bangladesh

Preface

The importance of formal education is diversified. The prime goal of modern education is not to impart knowledge only but to build a prosperous nation by developing skilled human resources. At the same time, education is the best means of developing a society free from superstitions and adheres to science and facts. To stand as a developed nation in the science and technology-driven world of the 21st century, we need to ensure quality education. A well-planned education is essential for enabling our new generation to face the challenges of the age and to motivate them with the strength of patriotism, values, and ethics. In this context, the government is determined to ensure education as per the demand of the age.

Education is the backbone of a nation and a curriculum provides the essence of formal education. Again, the most important tool for implementing a curriculum is the textbook. The National Curriculum 2012 has been adopted to achieve the goals of the National Education Policy 2010. In light of this, the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) has been persistently working on developing, printing, and distributing quality textbooks. This organization also reviews and revises the curriculum, textbook, and assessment methods according to needs and realities.

Secondary education is a vital stage in our education system. This textbook is catered to the age, aptitude, and endless inquisitiveness of the students at this level, as well as to achieve the aims and objectives of the curriculum. It is believed that the book written and meticulously edited by experienced and skilled teachers and experts will be conducive to a joyful experience for the students. It is hoped that the book will play a significant role in promoting creative and aesthetic spirits among students along with subject knowledge and skills.

The textbook on **Christian Religion Studies** has been written in the context of the changing world at the beginning of the 21st century. It includes the call for life in the Bible and the life sketch of the people called by God, in the background of huge changes in the demands and attitudes of the students. The textbook has been written keeping in mind that the students are encouraged to know the life and works of the Savior Jesus by believing in his salvation, and they become inspired in morality, spirituality, tolerance, generosity, and a non-communal sense of life and equality.

It may be mentioned here that due to the changing situation in 2024 and as per the needs the textbook has been reviewed and revised for the academic year 2025. It is mentionable here that the last version of the textbook developed according to the curriculum 2012 has been taken as the basis. Meticulous attention has been paid to the textbook to make it more learner-friendly and error-free. However, any suggestions for further improvement of this book will be appreciated.

Finally, I would like to thank all of those who have contributed to the book as writers, editors, reviewers, illustrators and graphic designers.

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Prof. Dr. A K M Reazul Hassan
Chairman
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Chapter One
The Holy Spirit

We know that there is only one God but three persons in Him. In this chapter we will learn about the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God the Father, and God the Son. The Holy Spirit existed even during the creation of the earth. He is existing now and will remain forever. On the day of Pentecost, He descended on the Apostles and empowered them to be preachers of faith. The Holy Spirit is the Helper who makes us holy, strengthens and matures our faith.

The coming of the Holy Spirit

At the end of the chapter, we will be able to:

- describe the Holy Trinity ;
- narrate the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles';
- explain the gifts and benefits of the Holy Spirit ;
- describe the blessings of the Holy Spirit in making a true Christian ;
- live sacred life being inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Lesson- 1: The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Apostles received the Holy Spirit. During these fifty days, they were hiding together in fear. They spent the time in prayer. Some of them were planning to return to their previous trade. Some even went out with nets for fishing. The resurrected Jesus appeared before them several times. At first they didn't recognize Him but later they did. They were gaining faith on the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus encouraged them. He said, "Do not be frightened, I will send you a Helper, He will remind you of everything".

Ten days after Jesus was taken up to Heaven, on the day of the Pentecost, the disciples gathered together at one place. Suddenly they heard sounds of a strong wind from the sky. The house where they lived was filled with that sound. They saw something like tongues of fire on their heads; their hearts were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. All of them started to talk in different foreign languages with the power of the Holy Spirit.

In Jerusalem, there gathered devoted followers of Judaism from different countries of the world. When they heard this noise, a large crowd gathered. They were all excited, because each of them heard the believers speaking in their own languages. In amazement and wonder they exclaimed, "These people who are talking like this are Galileans! How is it, then, that all of us hear them speaking in our own native languages? We are from Parthia, Media, and Elam; from Mesopotamia, Juddea, and Cappadocia; from Pontus and Asia, from Phrygia and Pamphylia, from Egypt and the regions of Libya near Cyrene. Some of us are from Rome, both Jews and Gentiles converted into Judaism, and some of us are from Crete and Arabia--yet all of us hear them speaking in our own languages about the great things that God has done!" Amazed and confused, they kept asking each other, "What does this mean?" But others made fun of the believers, saying, "These people are drunk!"

But Peter stood up with the other eleven apostles and in a loud voice began to speak to the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, listen to me and let me tell you what this means. These people are not drunk, as you suppose; it is only nine o'clock in the morning. Instead, this is what the prophet Joel spoke about" (Act 2: 1-16).

Thus the Apostles received the Holy Spirit on the pentecost day. Though all present there misunderstood them, they were able to make them realize the fact. Being enlightened by the Holy Spirit, they corrected the mistakes of people and made them understand that they were not drunk rather filled with the Holy Spirit. Their fear disappeared by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Peter, who was filled up with fear of the enemies and was staying with other disciples in one room, now came out and spoke loudly in front of the crowd. He claimed that the Jews were accusing Jesus unfairly. His courage came from the Holy Spirit. The Spirit inspired Peter to reveal the fact. Because of Peter's teaching the truth many people were baptized on that day and achieved the Holy Spirit.

Task: Enlist the changes that took place among the Apostles after they achieved the Holy Spirit.

Lesson - 2: Inspiration of the Holy Spirit

Those of us who have received Baptism, Holy Communion and the Confirmation, know the importance of these sacraments. Through these sacraments, we have achieved the Holy Spirit and have become strengthened. In this lesson we will elaborately discuss the Holy Spirit.

Through Baptism, we are being marked with the sign of the cross. Besides, we start our prayers or works with the sign of the cross and remember the mystery of the Holy Trinity. The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit-together is one God, and this is the whole mystery of the Holy Trinity. It is such a mystery that we cannot understand it very clearly. Whatever we understand is possible by deep faith, prayer and love. God is Love (1 John 4:8). This love is revealed through God's creation, Jesus' redemption, Holy Spirit's inspiration and help.

The word "inspiration" is embedded in the Holy Spirit. Dictionary meaning of it is encouragement, zeal, enthusiasm; tendency of inner strength to do some particular work. In Christianity, the inspiration is divine spirit which comes straight from God. God is Almighty and the Creator, source of all power and strength. He is the Lord of the Universe. From the time of creation, He made a plan for the redemption of the human race. Step by step, He revealed Himself through the Son and the Holy Spirit. The purpose of this revelation is that man can receive strength through the Spirit and redemption through the Son.

2025

Saint Iranius says, "Baptism gives us the grace of new birth in God, the Father, through His Son, in the Holy Spirit. For those who bear God's Spirit are led to the Ward, that is, to the Son, and the Son presents them to the Father, and the Father confers indestructibility on them. And it is impossible to see God's Son without the Spirit, and no one can approach the Father without the Son, for the knowledge of the Father is the Son, and the knowledge of God's Son is obtained through the Holy Spirit."

St. Paul says, "No one speaking by the Spirit of God can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3). It is the Holy Spirit who strengthens our heart and inspires us to know God and deepens our faith. God Himself gives this Spirit to those who are weak in their hearts so that they may move towards Him. For this reason we need to keep relationship with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit leads us to the Son and the Father. So the Holy Spirit helps us to grow in the mystery of the holy Trinity.

In the church, we first receive the Holy Spirit through the Baptism. In Baptism we wash away the original sin, receive life, divine blessing, and then receive faith. Thus we get the identity of the children of God. In this way, we are reborn. Through confirmation, we receive the Holy Spirit and come to know about Christ. The Holy Spirit enlightens our hearts and helps us to know and believe the Son of God.

In the Creed, we admit 'We believe in the Holy Spirit'. That means, we believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity. He is united with the Father and the Son; he is from the time of beginning. He is worshiped and glorified along with the Father and the Son. He is in action from the beginning of plan of man's salvation.

His descending upon the Apostles is a sign of his active presence in the church. He is always inspiring us to walk on the true path. Being inspired by the Holy Spirit, we call God our Father and acknowledge Jesus as our Savior. To live as believers the Holy Spirit gives us strength and courage. He gives us strength to face pain and sorrows, dangers and tests. He establishes unity, peace, and justice in place of conflict and strife.

Lesson - 3: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit and Their Benefits

God has given different gifts to different people. Through His gifts we can know and guide ourselves properly. By His gifts, we grow spiritually, grow mentally, relate to church and society and become the chosen and beloved ones of God.

Similarly God has given us the power to do many welfare, like spreading the gospel, healing the ill, bringing the sinners back to the honesty and so on. By all these, we remain connected spiritually with God. Moreover, we remain in the bond of love and grow in love and welfare. All of these are gifts of the Holy Spirit. He flourishes in different ways in different souls.

Twelve Benefits of the Holy Spirit

Saint Paul says, "There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served. There are different abilities to provide services, but the same God gives ability to everyone for their particular service. The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all. The Spirit gives one person a message full of wisdom, while to another person the same Spirit gives a message full of knowledge. One and the same Spirit gives faith to one person, while to another person gives the power to heal. The Spirit gives one person the power to work miracles; to another, the gift of speaking God's message; and again to another, the ability to tell the difference between gifts that come from the Spirit and those that do not. To one person he gives the ability to speak in strange tongues, and to another he gives the ability to explain what is said. But it is one and the same Spirit who does all these as he wishes, he gives a different gift to each person.

"Christ is like a single body, which has many parts; it is still one body, even though it is made up of different parts. In the same way, all of us, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slaves or free, have been baptized into the one body by the same Spirit, and we have all been given the one Spirit to drink. For the body itself is not made up of only one part, but of many parts." (1 Cor 12: 4-14)

In his letter Saint Paul said, "All of you are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it. In the church, God has put all in place; in the first place apostles, in the second place prophets, and in the third place teachers; then those who perform miracles, followed by those who are given the power to heal or to help others or to direct them or to speak in strange tongues" (1 Cor. 12: 27-28)

The Holy Spirit himself is a gift from God. He has been given to mankind in many ways from the very beginning of creation. The Holy Spirit is the breath of God, which is the source of life and existence of every living being. Only for the Holy Spirit, human beings, despite their sinfulness, are the images of God. They are saved and strengthened by God in different periods of time and they have received God as a gift. Thus they become complete; engage themselves in each other's welfare. From the Holy Bible, we come to know about the mercy of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity is the gift of Father and Son to the mankind. He is also called the breath of God; the disciples got a new life and got rid of all their fears after receiving this Holy Spirit. Therefore, they bore the testimony of the resurrected Christ with them. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit have been described in the Bible.

Seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

(1) Wisdom (2) Understanding (3) Conscience (4) Fortitude (5) Knowledge (6) Piety (7) Fear of the Lord. Saint Paul wrote to the Galatians that "Spirit produces - (a) love (b) joy (c) peace (d) patience (g) kindness (g) goodness (h) faithfulness (i) humility and G) self-control. There can't be any law against such things as these". (Gal 5: 22-23)

Everything that is good and beautiful in our lives and character is the work of the Holy Spirit. All these good things are results of the Holy Spirit. He inspires us so that we can be filled up with His gifts; we may be filled with His love, peace and happiness. Saint Paul has expressed these things to the Galatians. In the letter to the Romans, he mentioned the names of the benefits of the Holy Spirit in many ways. These gifts are very beautiful and pleasant. Who would not want them! To be filled with the gifts of the Spirit is to be like Christ; it is becoming the citizens of heaven. We greatly desire to have as our own. They come only from the Holy Spirit.

Saint Peter said, "For this very reason, do your best to add goodness to your faith, to your goodness add knowledge, to your knowledge add self-control, to your self-control add endurance, to your endurance add godliness, to your godliness add brotherly affection, and to your brotherly affection add love." (2 Peter 1: 5-7)

We cannot build up our own characters without the help of the Holy Spirit. Saint Peter calls us to try relentlessly to make the qualities work in our lives. For this we have to depend fully on the blessings and mercy of the Holy Spirit because He inspires us to lead our lives in line wih religion.

There are twelve benefits of the Holy Spirit- (1) Charity (2) Joy (3) Peace (4) Patience (5) Kindness (6) Goodness (7) Generosity (8) Gentleness (9) Faithfulness (10) Modesty (11) Self-control (12) Chastity

Task: Recall the names of the gifts and benefits of the Holy Spirit and write them down.

Lesson - 4: The Holy Spirit as the supplement

The Holy Spirit revealed Himself in many ways in the history of salvation. He was from the beginning of the earth as Father's breath. The ability to discern right and wrong comes from the Holy Spirit. He spoke through prophets, judges and rulers. Mary became the mother by the power of the Holy Spirit. He, through John the Baptist, called people to change their hearts. Thus all those things happened by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not visible to our eyes or we cannot express Him by our logic. Presence and work of the Holy Spirit are clearly visible to us. He is the Spirit of truth. Through Him, we come to know the truth.

Holy Spirit is known to us by many names. Jesus Christ called Him 'The Helper'. This means 'He is ready to stand for us all'. Before leaving the world, Jesus promised His disciples to send 'The Helper'. He would be with them and guide them and that happened on the day of Pentecost he descended on the Apostles. He consoled them and gave power to forgive sins. So the Holy Spirit is the Consoler. Actually Jesus Himself was the first Consoler. He did not leave his disciples orphaned and scattered, rather he kept them together in peace.

In the Holy Bible, Saint Paul and Saint Peter called the Holy Spirit in different names. They called him as the Promised Spirit, Christ's Spirit, Lord's Spirit and God's Spirit. We see the presence of the Holy Spirit in church in different ways. In different sacraments, we see his presence and work. Different objects like water, oil, fire, light, cloud, sign of the cross, palm, finger, and pigeon and so on, we see the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. His grace is poured upon the human beings continuously through these signs. The Holy Spirit is our constant helper and consoler who guides us all towards the truth.

Task: Discuss in pairs and find out the reasons for calling the Holy Spirit the Consoler.

Exercise

Fill in the blanks

1. The Holy Spirit is the ______________ person of the Holy Trinity.
2. At first they ______________ recognize but later did.
3. The Jews from many countries then ____ live in Jerusalem.
4. The word 'Inspiration' is ______________ related to the Holy Spirit.
5. God has given us all different gifts or ______________.

Match column 'A' with column 'B'

A	B
1. Holy Spirit comes from the Holy father and	• He inspired St. Peter
2. Then in one room	• their fear was over
3. Strengthen by the Holy Spirit	• the Son of God
4. To reveal and spread the truth	• they used to live
5. Jesus is all strength and	• he made a great plan
	• source of power

Multiple choice questions

1. The Holy Spirit is the -

   a. first person b. third person

   c. second person d. one and only one

2. How did the apostles correct the people?

   a. By the inspiration of Holy Spirit.

   b. By own power.

   c. In the inspiration of spreading the gospel.

   d. By self inspiration

Read the following text and answer questions no. 3 and 4

After the completion of study, Nibir joined a buying house as a cashier. He works regularly and with responsibility. He rejects the provocation of money and doing wrong thing from his fellow workers because he learnt about this in his childhood from his family.

3. Who guides Nibir?

a. Prophets b. friends

c. The Holy Spirit d. teachers

4. This type of work of Nibir can make a simple person -

i. spiritually strong

ii. mentally well grown

iii. God's beloved one.

Which one is correct ?

a. i b. ii

c. i and ii d. i, ii and iii

Creative questions

1. The Head Master of Sacred Heart School got immigration Visa and left for the U.S.A. The Secretary of the governing body hon'ble Bishop asked senior teacher Mr. Sebastian to take the responsibility. The school was running in much disorder because of local goons. So he was hesitant in taking the charge and was also very scared. At home he prayed to God for strength and got courage and inspiration from God. Then the next day, he wrote a letter to the Bishop giving his consent to take the charge of the Headmaster.

   a. Who descended on the apostles on the day of Pentecost?

   b. Why did the Apostles start talking in different languages?

   c. Explain which of the Holy Spirit's gift has become evident in Sebastian's work.

   d. Do you think all the results of the Holy Spirit prevail in Sebastian's work- explain logically.

2. Mr. Roman Barmon and Mr. Peter Gomes are two famous persons of Krishnanagar Parish. Roman Barman is very much God fearing and good Catechist. Many people are charmed by his godliness and benefitted through advice. He always encourages people to lead an honest life. He serves the ill and prays for them. Besides, Patrick Gomes too tries to pray with the drug addicts and help them by giving guideline. He arranges work for them and brings them to right path.

   a. Who lived in Jerusalem?

   b. Why do we trust in the Holy Spirit?

   c. By which inspiration does Roman Barman run his work?

   d. Roman Barman and Patrick Gomes have got their power of good work from the same God. - justify the statement.

Answer briefly-

1. What is meant by the Holy Trinity?
2. How did the Apostles get the Holy Spirit?
3. How are we marked by the sign of cross?

Essay type questions

1. Describe the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity.
2. Narrate the incident of coming of the Holy Spirit on the apostles.
3. Explain the Holy Spirit's gifts and its results.

Chapter Two
Nurturing the Creation of God

God has created every single thing of the universe with His own hand. Everything was good and man was the supreme creation of all. He has the power to rule over everything. It is the mankind's duty to love and take care of all the creation of God. Through performing this duty, human beings express their obedience and faithfulness to God. In this way, his humanity flourishes and can respond to God's calling. For this reason, it is man's responsibility, his sacred duty, to take care of the wonderful creation.

God has created everything perfectly.

At the end of the chapter we will be able to:

- to take care and preserve the creation ;
- explain how one can love God through loving and caring the creation;
- explain from religious perspective the need to protect environment from pollution;
- to save creation from pollution.

Lesson - 1: Nurturing and Protecting the Environment

The mystery of creation plays a very important role in the plan of salvation. We have already learnt about God's goal of creating the universe. Through creating everything of the universe, God has given it fullness. He is the Creator and the Supreme power; none can be compared with Him. His creation reflects immeasurable love for the human race. All His creation is good and man is the best creation of all. Man has been given the power to rule over everything. Since God created everything for the betterment of man, he must take care of them all responsibly.

But in reality, we have lost the supremacy. Before knowing how to take care and protect the creation, we need to know how it is getting polluted and being destroyed.

Task: Make a list of five causes of pollution of the environment.

Lesson - 2: Pollution of the Environment

Goodness of creation is getting lost day by day. It is being ruined; losing its beauty. The reason behind is the human sin, especially their selfishness. Human beings are polluting the nature and the earth. From our discussions we will find many reasons of it.

Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari said, "If God created the human being before all other creations, they would have died the next day without the care from the nature". It is a very important statement but unfortunately we do not pay much attention to it, because we don't feel how much the creation takes care of us. So, we are using God's creation selfishly and wasting them.

At the very beginning, relationship between God and man, and man and other creations was very good. Due to man's sin, it has been distorted (Gen 3:14-23). Because of disobedience and selfishness, man has been thrown out of the Eden Garden; darkness of sin came down upon man. One brother has killed another. This has polluted creation. So the soil of the earth has been soaked with blood and cursed.

For luxuriousness, greed, lust, lack of self-control, men are facing conflict and strife. Racism and misuse of religions have given rise to many wars. Many promising lives are lost and the world peace is hampered

After completing the creation, God took rest on the seventh day; but due to industrialization the world is not getting any rest. The intrusion on tranquility has become unbearable. Air, water, soil are regularly being destroyed because of indiscriminate use of nature's resources. The climate is changing. Every year it is getting warmer and thus becoming intolerable. So, nature is facing adverse effects. During winter the temperature gets too cold and summer becomes hotter.

Indiscriminate deforestation makes the wildlife without shelter. Rivers are being filled up and wastes are dumped into them. As a result fish and other water creatures are disappearing. Atom bombs and poisonous gases are polluting the air and making it heavy. It is bringing destruction and dangerous natural disasters. The curse and punishment of nature is coming on the human race. They are facing death.

The climate change has given rise to temperature. CO_2 increased and as a result, destructive floods and landslides visited China and Pakistan during the last few years. Besides, draught visited Russia, bushfire occurred in Brazil; and earthquakes and tsunamis hit Japan and Indonessia. All these natural adversities took away life of many people.

According to climatologists, Bangladesh is the most risky area now. She is going to lose her lower southern parts due to climate change. Already the affect of climate change has been observed in different forms in Bangladesh. Untimely draught, flood, rise of the sea level, rise of temperature, increase of salinity, storm-cyclone, rise of harmful insects, landslides, etc. are increasing. Climate change caused water, scarcity, malnutrition and different diseases. All these natural adversities and disasters increased the poverty of the country.

It is one of the duties of mankind to take care of the creation because these are created for taking mankind's care. Man should love and be grateful to nature for the care it provides for them.

We can go back to Wangiri from Kenia. He said, "If God created human beings before creating other things, they would have died the next day in absence of care from nature." Taking care of God's creation is a responsibility of man because they are created to take of man. In order to have the care of those creations, man should love, be grateful, and take proper care of those creations.

Task: Mention five ways to take care of the creation of God.

Lesson - 3: Keeping Nature Free From Pollution

Due to pollution in the environment, the wonderful creation of God is being destroyed gradually. Human beings are responsible for this destruction. In order to live healthy lives on earth, our environment must be protected. The goodness of the creation must be secured and saved at any cost. It is the moral duty of every person. The environment must be kept free from pollution by proper care and preservation. We ourselves can find some ways and means to do it. Some possible means are described below:

1. The knowledge of nature is the source of human knowledge and science. Man has advanced a long way and discovered many new things. Nature is the source of all inspirations. Nature has provided the data and information, knowledge and strength. With knowledge from nature, human beings created new things. When people will recognize this truth that nature is source of all knowledge, they will love and feel the urge to protect nature.

2. People are damaging nature by establishing industries and cutting down trees. As a result of this industrialization, nature gets no rest. Therefore, it is the nature which faces damages the most. All the raw materials for the industries come from nature. This is making air, water and soil polluted. Temperature is getting warmer and unbearable. This oppression and injustice towards creation will stop only when people will realize the fact.

3. People in the modern age have become very selfish and self-centered. They do not hesitate to harm others' interests. They don't have time to consider others' prestige or interest. Now-a-days land dispute, terrorism, racism, homicides, harassment of people, torturing on weak, breaking of large families are alarmingly increasing. Small families are getting smaller. Day by day single families are increasing. Family bondage, affection, love is getting lost. Family and society need to get back justice, peace, faith, love and care of others. Religion, culture and tradition have to be utilized properly. These can glorify the beauty of nature.

4. The attitude of helping the poor who depend on nature has to be increased. We have to preserve nature by planting trees, cultivating barren lands and protecting the cultivable lands, forests, hills and increasing fishing and animal breeding. A great number of people till today depend on nature. They collect their food from nature. They cultivate their land for which they depend on nature. But the rich and greedy people now take over nature for self-interest, snatching their last belongings, driving them away from the lap of the Mother Nature. Even the nature is not being able to flow in its natural course. Due to climate change poor people are being deprived and neglected. We have to think about them and ensure nutritious diet for them.

5. People of all stages should be made aware of the global warming, climate change, protection of environment and morality. In order to make people aware, we need to attach more importance to education, seminar, discussion etc. Alongside formal education, we need to build awareness through media. We have to put more emphasis on human rights, child care, children's education, care of nature, reducing waste of water, river dredging, waste management law, use of solar power, tree plantation and preservation. The way of stopping environmental pollution must be introduced and taught to all.

Task-1: Write the names of the tasks which you can do in your area to preserve the nature.

Task-2: Discuss in pairs the way we can properly honour people in families, schools and society and then present them together.

Lesson - 4: Loving God through Loving His Creation

We all know that the salvation of the creation is only upon God. "At the beginning, God built sky and earth" (Cor 1:1). He is the Master of everything visible or invisible.

Planting trees is the sign of love for creation

After He created all things "God created man in image; in the image of God Himself, man was created; male and female he created them". He saw everything was very good. By creating human beings, God revealed His own glory. He established friendship with them. Therefore, they can love and know Him.

Through the creation, God has shown His love for human beings. Because He is the source of love, He is real love. He taught the human beings how to love each other. By caring and loving His creation, we can express our love for the Creator.

To take care and govern the creation, human beings must protect its goodness and beauty. Otherwise he will fail to perform His duty. Governing and taking care of the nature is man's responsibility. It does not mean that he has to enslave, consume or destroy it. Human beings will take care of the Mother Nature and then the nature will take care of him.

As God told Moses from the burning bush, "Take off the shoes from your feet, because the land you're standing on is the holy land". (Ex 3:5) The same is true with the entire creation. One needs to go everywhere with the same feeling. Through loving and taking care of everything, including man, we can love our God. Thus will the superiority of creation be proved.

Task : "God can be achieved, not by looking after His creation but through His prayer - arrange a debate competition on this topic.

Exercise

Fill in the blanks

a. By loving people God ______ (gave) responsibility on them.

b. God took rest _____ (manipulated)

c. For self interest _____ is being controlled.

d. ____ source of love.

e. At the beginning _____ started creating sky and earth.

Match column 'A' with column 'B'

A	B
1. God has given the universe	• every one sacred duty.
2. Nurturing the creation of God is	• its fulfillment (perfection) on everything.
3. There is no one else	• poverty in Bangladesh is increasing.
4. For self interest we are	• like Him.
5. For natural calamity	• spoiling the creation of God.
	• getting lost.

Multiple choice question

1. Who are mainly responsible for environment pollution?
   - a. nature
   - b. human beings
   - c. businessman
   - d. rich nation/countries

2. Why did God create human being at last ?
   - a. as human are the best creation
   - b. so that they get a beautiful world
   - c. for their love
   - d. to praise the Lord

Read the following text and answer questions no. 3 and 4

Rima likes gardening and doing poultry. So she waters her flower garden, weeds it out and feeds the birds many times. She earns a handsome amount by selling flowers, chickens and ducks.

3. What does Rima's work reflect?

   a. love for the creation
   b. authority/loosing over nature
   c. governing the nature
   d. spreading self power

4. The stem reveals :

   i. superiority of creation
   ii. love of God
   iii. best of creation

   Which one is correct ?

   a. i
   b. ii
   c. i and ii
   d. i, ii and iii

Creative questions

1. Arnab filled up a canal and constructed his house on it. He made beautiful furnitures by cutting down trees. But dumped plastic, polythene and domestic waste all around the house. He loves to eat bird and so often goes for hunting bird and animals. He earns money by selling trees and animal skin.

a. Who has the responsibility to take care of the creator?

b. Explain the cause behind the destruction of nature.

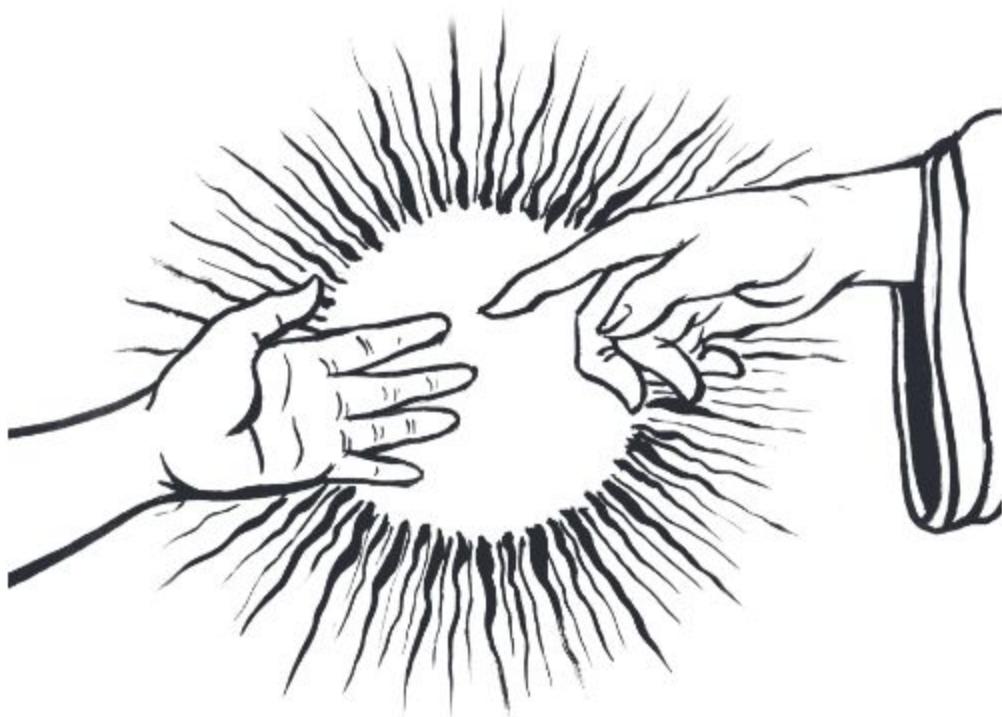
c. Explain what type of problem is created by Arnab.

d. In the light of the text, what type of step Arnab can take to change all his bad habits. Give your comments.

2. John and Jeny went to Gazipur "Prarthana Kunja" to attend a seminar. Seeing the environment there they exclaimed - "Wow, How beautiful!". All around the place there are many fruit trees and flower garden. The priest there said, "God has created all these". Later they went back home and formed an organization. From the organization, they started helping the poor, assisting the sick, educating adults, planting trees etc. Their initiative stopped cutting trees and hunting the birds. All the villagers became very happy at this.

   a. Who is the main source of love?
   b. How is the supremacy of creation getting lost?
   c. How do John and Jenny carry out responsibility assigned by God? Explain.
   d. "John and Jeny love and respect God through work" - evaluate the statement in the light of your textbook.

Answer briefly

1. Why should people take care of the creation?
2. How is the beauty of nature being polluted?
3. How can we love God?

Essay type questions

1. In which way can the creation of God be nurtured and preserved?
2. How can we show love to God by showing love and taking care of His creation? Explain.
3. What can be done to save the world from pollution?

Chapter Three

God and Man

In the book of Genesis the description of creation shows that God has created everything one by one. After each day's creation, God looked at them and saw everything was good. On the fifth day He said, "Let us make man in our image, to our likeness" (Gen 1 :26). So God created man in His image. He gave them power to rule over everything.

Union of God and Man

At end of the chapter, we will be able to:

- explain the idea that man is co-worker of God ;
- narrate the relationship between God and man and between man and man and at the sametime be able to describe the need and outcome of this relationship ;
- explain the ways to maintain these relationships ;
- maintain good relationship with God by maintaining good relationship with man.

Lesson - 1: Man as the care giver to God's creation

Man, the best creation of God, is the expression of His love. He had a great plan behind this creation. He wanted to build a strong relationship with man and in this relationship, He wanted to reveal Himself. He gave him supremacy and power to rule over everything. After creating man, He blessed him and said, "Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control. I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds and all the wild animals"(Genesis 1 :28). These words of blessings reveal the goal of creation very clearly. We have come to know that God has created us to praise and glorify Him. Not only that, He has also given him the responsibility of taking care of the creation. Now, we will learn about the way to become God's co-worker. In other words, we shall know the meaning of becoming co-worker:

1. To be the service giver of God is like an invitation for the mankind. Through this service, his self-respect is flourished and developed. He needs co-worker to continue the work of creation. For this reason, He always calls the people. So we can say that to be His service giver means to be obedient and to respond to His call. When boy Samuel was called, Eli taught him to answer saying: "speak, Lord, your servant is listening". In the past, He called the prophets and other people to take part in His work. He still calls us in the same way.

2. To be the service giver means to take care or guide the creation in the name of God. We can't see God but He has created humans in His own image. He has given human beings wonderful qualities, knowledge and power by which human beings are performing their duties.

3. God created human beings with love. He enables and orders them to love all as well. Through human beings and their mutual service and love, God wants to reveal Himself and His love. So, we can say God has given us some of His own qualities. By applying these qualities human gives service to God and the creations.

4. God has created humans. He is the giver of life, protector and savior. He gives the mankind the opportunity to take care of and bring up His creation. For example, through doctors, God cures and heals even various complicated diseases. God is the real Healer, doctors are just the tools. The doctors perform their duties through the knowledge and power given by God. Through parents He sends new life on earth. Thus they become His service giver. God is the real healer, doctors are only the means. The doctors perform their duties through his intelligence and power given by God.

5. Jesus said, "I am not calling you slaves but friends". There is nothing more precious than sacrificing life for friends. From this we can understand that we are called to be friends of God and He shares everything with us. In the Old Testament, Abraham is called "Friend of God".
6. Creating him in His own image, God has given human the best gift 'freedom'. By using his freedom human can take part in the service of God. Through the use of freedom in his own life human becomes the best co-worker of God.

Task: Share in your group, how you find yourself as God's co-worker

Lesson - 2: Good Relationship between God and Man in Eden Garden

God created the universe, there were no plants or bushes on earth. God poured rain and watered the earth. But there was no one to cultivate the land. God took some soil from the ground and formed a man out of it, he breathed life-giving breath into his nostrils and the man began to live. He named him 'ADAM' which means man.

After creating man and woman, God kept them in a wonderful tranquil place called 'Eden Garden'. He gave them everything for their joy and happiness. He gave them right to enjoy everything of His creation. All the trees of this garden were wonderful, the fruits of which were also very sweet. There was a tree in the middle of the garden, which was called the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

God gave man ownership of the garden and asked them to take care of it. He forbade man to eat fruits of that tree. God noticed that Adam was very lonely. He said, "It is not good for man to live alone. I will make a suitable companion to help him".

Then the Lord God caused man fall into a deep sleep and while he was sleeping, He took out one of man's ribs and formed a woman from it. She became the companion of man. Adam understood that there was a deep relationship between him and the woman. Both of them were human beings. Both of them realized that they were complementary to each other. So, they felt strong attraction to live a conjugal life. As human beings with the desire for each other they lived happily in close relationship with God in the heavenly bliss. They were naked but not embarrassed. Living in such relationship, man and woman lived in relationship with God.

Task: Describe Adam and Eve's relationship with God in Eden Garden.

Lesson - 3: Sin of disobedience

The peaceful relationship between God and man in Eden Garden made Satan very jealous. He started to look for the opportunity to destroy it. Snake was the most cunning of all. One day, Satan came to Eve in the guise of a snake and asked her, "Did God really tell you not to eat fruit from any tree in the garden?" "We may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden", the woman answered, "Except the tree in the middle. God told us not to eat the fruit of that tree or even not to touch it; if we do, we will die."

The snake replied, "That's not true; you will not die. God said that, because he knows that the day you would eat, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God and you know what is good and bad". The woman saw the fruit was good to eat and nice to look at, and ideal for gaining knowledge. So she plucked some of the fruits. She herself ate and gave to her husband, and he also ate. As soon as they had eaten the fruit, they realized that they were naked. So they sewed leaves of fig trees and covered themselves. They realized that they had disobeyed God and committed sin.

Hearing the footsteps of God they got scared and hid themselves behind the trees. Purity of their hearts is destroyed. So far, they had simple, normal, peaceful relationship with God. Now the presence of God became unbearable to them. They started to fear God and felt guilty. They got punished for their sins. Thus the fall of man came. The relationship between God and man is now destroyed. Adam blamed Eve for his sin and Eve blamed the snake. God punished man, woman and the snake. They were driven out of heaven and sent to earth. The door of heaven is now closed for them.

Task: Read Genesis Chapter-3 and act out story of the fall of man.

Lesson - 4: Re-establishment of Relationship

Despite God's love man has become unfaithful to Him repeatedly. Man started to live the sinful life in this world, but God wants to save him. He tried to rebuild the broken relationship with man; for this purpose He took steps again. He entered into the life of mankind. We will now learn about what steps God has taken to build the broken relationship between Him and man.

We have already learned that man has committed sin by being disobedient. God did not abandon him. He promised to send His son and redeem man from his sins. In order to send his Son to this earth, He chose a nation called the Israelites. He called many individuals, kings, prophets to fulfill His plan and promise.

Abraham was made the father of the believers and the father of the chosen race. He established a covenant with him. God said to him, "Now I am establishing a covenant between you and me. I will make your descendants numerous".

The earth was filled with sins of man and God destroyed everything by flood. But He established a covenant with Noah and as a sign of this covenant, God showed a rainbow on the sky. He promised not to destroy the mankind with flood anymore.

God called Moses to free the Israelites from the slavery of Egyptians. He led the Jews towards the Promised Land. On their way to Canaan, they felt the presence of God in different ways. He said to the Israelites repeatedly, "You are my own people and I am your God".

Then He chose the kings and the prophets. He chose King David and later in this race was born the Son of God. Prophet Isaiah made the prophecy of the Savior's birth. The final stage of re-establishing the relationship is the birth of His Son as man. Jesus was born in the womb of a woman as descendant of King David. In order to redeem man from the slavery of sin, Jesus willingly accepted the death on a cross. He rose on the third day. Thus overcoming the power of death, Jesus rescued man from the clutches of Satan. He gave back the lost respect to the human beings. He is the Messiah who re-opened the closed door. Through him God's promise and plan were fulfilled. The broken relationship between God and man has been re-established. Jesus is the new Adam. In order to preserve this relationship, Jesus established the church and holy sacraments. Through baptism, we get rid of original sin and become children of God. Through the sacrament of reconciliation, our sins are forgiven and we become worthy of return to God.

In the history of mankind, thus God saved man. Despite man's unfaithfulness, God Himself took steps to re-establish and maintain relationship with man.

Lesson - 5: The way of Maintaining Good Relationship Between God and Man and Between Man and Man

We all wish to live in peace and happiness forever. At the same time, we desire friends and companions. God has given man such an innate tendency. We all want to be acquainted with others. Even a child becomes happy to get one like it. God took the first initiative to establish relationship with us. The Son of God has come to this earth to be united with man. Now, we will discuss how a good relationship can be maintained.

1. **Communication:** Relationship has to be maintained through communication. This can be done in various ways: for example through meeting others directly; talking to them personally, and using different media like exchanging letters, emails, phone calls, etc.
2. **Serving others:** The best way to establish and maintain relationship with God is to serve human beings and do a lot of welfare for them. We cannot serve invisible God without serving visible human beings.
3. **Worship:** Feeling presence of God through regular prayer, meditation, taking part in liturgy, reading the Holy Bible, we can communicate with God. If we have good relationship with God, we will also have the same with man. And on the other hand, if we have good relationship with man, we will have the same with God.
4. **Faith and trust:** Mutual trust is very important element in good relationship. With mutual trust we can very easily improve our relationship. On the other hand having faith and trust in God, our relationship with Him deepens.
5. **Honesty:** Honesty is the foundation of good relationship. When we remain honest in exchanging feelings and opinions, we can maintain good relationship. We can never make good relationship with others through the means of tricks and deception and falsity.
6. **Making others one's own:** We have both strengths and weakness. When we make somebody our own and when other people make ourselves own, we all become glad. Human wants to be each other's own heartily. Through mutual acceptance, we become very close to each other. We desire acceptance from each other. God accepts us in whatever way we are. That is why we can return to Him.

7. **Respect:** We build relationship with others through mutual respect. We can respect others by giving opportunity of expressing opinions, paying attention to others' opinions, by standing beside others in different situations. Everyone is distinct and unique; respecting that difference also helps to improve relationship. God Himself respects everyone's freedom.

(8) **Mutual understanding:** We can come to mutual understanding by discussing matters with others and accepting them. This helps to maintain relationship.

(9) **Co-operation:** We gain strength and courage through mutual helps in the special distressed moments of our lives. We ourselves become happy and make others also happy by attending different joyful festivals. This also helps deepen our relationship. We are deeply related to God because He helps us in every different situation.

(10) **Equality:** Our relationship with others deepens through respecting others regardless of young and old, rich and poor, male and female. We all are equal in the eyes of God.

Thus by loving their fellow beings and maintaining relationship people can establish and maintain good relationship with God.

> **Task:** Make a poster showing how you can maintain good relationship with others in your class. Then hang it somewhere for others.

Exercise

Fill in the blanks

1. We are forgiven our ___ sin through baptism.
2. Man was given responsibility to ___ on everything.
3. To get God's company and to develop bond with each other man ___lived.
4. Man came on earth after ___ from the heaven.
5. The foundation of good relation is ___.

Match column 'A' with column 'B'

A	B
1. God has tried to build with man	• all the responsibility of creation..
2. Behind the creation of man	• a close tie.
3. God has given man	• God had a great plan.
4. God with the hands of doctors	• man came on earth
5. Being driven from the heaven	• working to heal.
	• power to rule.

Multiple choice questions

1. Who is called 'the friend of God' in the Old Testament?

a. Mosses b. Abraham
b. Daniel c. Elio

2. Why did God make man the owner of Eden Garden?

a. To rule b. To fulfill the plan
c. For happiness and pleasure of human d. For keeping purity.

Read the following text and answer questions no. 3 and 4

Joy is the only child of his parents. He plays computer games and spoils time when his mother tells him to study. He abstains from evening prayer. He does not attend Sunday mass, does whatever he wants to.

3. Who was sent by God to turn man from this condition?

a. Mosses b. Elio
c. Jesus d. John

4. What might happen for such behavior of Joy?

i. deterioration/worsening relationship with God.
ii. deviation of heavenly peace.
iii. chaos in family.

Which one is correct-

a. i b. i and ii
c. ii and iii d. i, ii and iii

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Creative questions

1. Nikhil is very greedy. He grabbed the land of villagers and became very rich. He has built a huge house and decorated the house with different furniture. Though he has riches, he doesn't help anyone in their distress. The parish priest advised him to abandon this path and said, "God has taken many steps to show the right path to people like you."

    a. What is the foundation of good tie?

    b. What is meant by service giver?

    c. How is the tie between Nikhil and God? - Explain.

    d. Justify/evaluate the statement of parish priest against Nikhil's attitude.

2. Mr. Jerom works as the head of an organization. For the betterment of the organization, he appointed poor, skilled and hard-working workers. All of them carry on their responsibility very enthusiastically and happily. So, the organization started to develop day by day. Mr. Jerom became very happy and grew interested to give more facility to his staff. He created provision for financial support and loan for the poor workers.

    a. Which image was followed to create man?

    b. Why was the relationship between man and God destroyed?

    c. How do the activities of Mr. Jerom serve the staff? Discuss.

    d. Evaluate the statement in the light of the textbook.—

"Except Mr. Jerom's work, there are many tasks which help to establish good ties with God"

Answer briefly

1. Why did God create man in his own image?
2. What is meant by service giver?
3. Why did Jesus establish the church and Holy Sacraments?

Essay type questions

1. How can man be God's assistant?
2. What is the importance of maintaining relationship between man and God?
3. Describe in your own words the tie of God with Adam and Eve in the Eden Garden.

Chapter Four

The Consequences of the Fall of Man

We can see that human beings have attraction towards two sides: desire for goodness and attraction towards the evil. God has created mankind and given them the free will power and has ordered them to love. But, humankind has invited its misfortunes by applying their freedom of will, choosing the evil instead of good.

In the beginning of the creation, man willingly disobeyed God's commands and caused their own downfall. The sin of this disobedience is human's fundamental sin. In other words, to go against God willingly is a sin that causes downfall. The story of the fall of Adam and Eve has been dramatically described in the Genesis.

We have already learnt about the fall of man and its results, different types of sins and their results, and the original sin by Adam and Eve. In this chapter, we will discuss the fall of man elaborately. God punished man for his sin, but He did not destroy him. Now he has to struggle very hard but he has strong desire to be united with God. In one way, man has attraction towards sin; on the other hand has eagerness for salvation. Through the lessons of the chapter, we will try to deeper our faith in God.

At the end of the chapter, we will be able to:

- describe the struggle of life due to fall of man ;
- describe the promise and plan of God for saving people ;
- describe the quest for God by man ;
- narrate the means to get rid of sins ;
- tell how to depend on God at every state of life.

Lesson - 1: Fall and Struggle of Man

Man's fall for Sin God gave free-will to the man that he created. He placed in front of him the fruit of the tree of good and evil. God trusted man. He wanted that man willingly keeps away from sin. But he was tempted by Satan and disobeyed God. Consequently, he lost the trust of God. Hence, the sin that he committed is called the fundamental sin. Thus he preferred to have his own will instead of God's. God created man in His own image but he did not realize the importance of it. He fell in the trap of Satan and wanted to be 'like God' or His equivalent. This high ambition of human is the root cause of his fall.

The consequence of sin

By falling in sin, Adam and Eve lost their original purity and lost the grace that they received from God. St. Paul says, "Everyone has sinned and is far away from God's saving presence" (Rom 3: 23). Because of sin, our first parents started to fear God.

Before committing sin human beings had good relationship among themselves. He had good relationship between his body, mind and soul, and between man and woman. Because of sin, this wonderful relationship was ruined.

(1) Man had an influence of his spirit on his body and mind. He had strong spiritual strength but his spirituality vanished. Now his body and mind don't obey the instruction of his spirit.

(2) An anxiety rose between man and woman. Because of sin man and woman started looking at each other with lust and became domineering.

(3) Their solidarity with creation got ruined. Nature will no more be friendly with them. The soil of this earth remains cursed. He has to struggle, drop the sweat of his head to his feet and thus has to produce crop from the soil. The soil now produces weeds and thorns for him.

(4) Man will return to the dust by which he was created. That is, death entered into human history.

(5) As a result of original sin, the relationship among human being declined. They started to envy each other. Cain slaughtered his own brother Abel.

Man Falls into Struggle

In spite of his being a free person, because of the original sin of Adam and Eve, man is always under the spell of Satan. The result of the original sin is "the slavery to Satan who has power over death." Man has an attraction towards evil which springs from within. It causes lack of reasoning in man, and as a result, man makes many serious mistakes. These mistakes make life complex, troublesome and restless. His struggle with internal and external world also increases.

Serious struggle of human life is the result of his sin and various hesitations of his life. This struggle is his endless strive to defeat evil or sin and establish truth and good. A good or positive power is present in all people. Man wants to live honest life. Everyone loves truth and beauty but it is not always possible to establish truth and beauty.

The whole history of mankind is the struggle against evil power. According to Jesus, this situation will exist in the history from the beginning to the end of the world. Truth has to be established through struggle. Through much struggle, sacrifice, depending on God's grace man receives the 'redemption' in life. St. Paul has explained human helplessness in this way: I do not do what I want to do, rather I do what I do not want to do. But we believe that by this unending struggle we have to reach the peak of freedom. This struggle is a test of the believers' faith and redemption. We experience the resurrected Christ through regular life and by defeating the evil power. Thus we experience the joy of overcoming death.

Task: Share your experience in the group of how you experience a struggle between good and evil powers.

Lesson - 2: God's Promise and Plan to Save the Mankind

God is infinitely good and loving. All His works are great. His love for man is also infinite. Even though man fell into sin, God did not destroy them from the earth. He also did not hate them either. The presence of sin in human history can't be denied. So God made a great plan to redeem them. He promised to mankind after they had become the sinners. That He would set mankind free from sin. This part (Gen. 3: 9, 15) of the Book of Genesis is called "the First Good News", because it has the first declaration about Messiah or Savior, the conflict between snake and woman and about the final win of her descendants.

From this promise, we come to know about the coming of Jesus Christ, the new Adam, the Savior. He was obedient till his death on the cross. He compensated for Adam's sin of disobedience. The name of the lady that is mentioned here is Mary, the Mother of Christ, the new Eve. Due to Jesus Christ's holiness and God's grace she was free from original sin.

A question may arise in our mind that why God did not protect Adam from committing the first sin. Saint Leo the Great said, "Christ's inexpressible grace gave us blessings better than those the demon's envy had taken away." Saint Thomas Aquinas wrote, "There is nothing to prevent human nature being raised up to something greater, even after sin; God permits evil in order to draw forth some greater good. Thus Saint Paul says, 'Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more'; and the Exulted sings, 'O happy fault,... which gained for us so great a Redeemer."

The Christians always believe, "This world is created with the Creator's love and this love protects the creation".

> **Task:** Share with others if you have experienced any incident that shows you have been able to overcome a bad situation and afterwards achieved something good from it.

Lesson - 3: Man in Search of God

Some basic questions in man's life are: Who am I? Where do I come from? Where will I go? Who has created me? Why did he create me? The wise men called these 'questions of life'. Man's quest for God begins from his questions of life. Man desires to find his own Creator and wants to be united with Him. He wants to feel the glory of God in his own life. He wants to experience God in order to see how good God is. He has unquenchable thirst to find God in his own life. We also find the search for God in the Psalms.

In Psalm 63 it has been said,

O God, you are my God, and I long for you.

My whole being desires you;

like a day, worn out and waterless land,

My soul is thirsty for you,

Let me see You in the sanctuary;

Let me see how mighty and glorious You are."

Psalm 42 says---
As a deer longs for stream of cool water,

so I long for You, O God.

I thirst for You, the living God;

when can I go and worship in Your presence?

Why do people look for God? God, the Creator Himself wants to come close to us. So, He gave us all these strong desires to be attached to man. He gave us such emptiness, which can be filled only by Him. Sea is the source of river water and again it goes back to the sea. Human life is like that. The source of our life is God and He is our final destination. We have come from Him and will return to Him. As long as we live, we live to glorify Him. So, we the human beings in every state of our lives, in every work, we feel the existence of God. We wish to see God, wish to fulfill His desire through all our works. By finding God, we wish to be satisfied and complete.

From time immemorial, people of all religions search for God. Their prayer, meditation, reading holy books, doing good works, following religious rituals, serving man, gaining knowledge, going on pilgrimage or entering into religious life- all these are parts of searching for God. By loving God's creations and attaining holiness, people love the Creator Himself and feel the proximity to God. We look for God everywhere, but He is within us. This knowledge of God made our national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam write:

> You are in my heart always, O my God.
> I look for you elsewhere, but in vain.
> Like Spirit you are living in my heart.

Poet Rabindranath Tagore said:

> I found you in my heart
>
> Now I desire for nothing else.

This way, the endless search for God is going on.

Task: Make a list of your way of searching for God. Share in your group the joyful experience of finding God.

Lesson - 4: Way of Redemption

God has created man so that man knows Him, obeys Him and live a happy life both in this world as well as in heaven. But man deprived himself by committing sin. They ruined their relationship with God. But God took the initiative to bring them back to right path. To be redeemed man needs the help of God and it is done through Jesus Christ. Besides, He has given the Law to human beings. Through that, man will find God's grace and will be saved. Let's see now how we can be saved.

(1) **Accepting Jesus as the Saviour:** God Himself promised that He would free mankind from the bondage of sin. He fulfilled His promise by sending His own Son. Jesus came into this world, proclaimed about the redemption, suffered and died on cross and on the third day rose from death. Thus He redeemed us. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one reaches the Father except by me" (John 14:6).

(2) **Obeying the moral laws:** The Law of God plays a vital role on the way to redemption. The Ten Commandments of the Old Testament and the commandment of love given by Jesus show us the way to redemption. One day a young man came to Jesus and asked, "My Lord, what should I do to achieve the eternal life?" Jesus replied, "If you want to enter eternal life, follow the divine rules". The best of these commandments is to love God and love your neighbours like yourself. By doing this, we can be saved.

(3) **God's grace and righteousness:** Grace of God and righteousness come from the Holy Spirit. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we die to sin and achieve new life. The first grace of it is changing mind from sin and following in the footsteps of Jesus, expressing our eagerness for redemption, achieving the Holy Spirit and renewing our faith. All these depend on the grace of God. He provides it from His own life.

(4) **Being members of the church:** To redeem His followers Jesus founded the church.The Holy Spirit is present in the church. There is administration of sacraments in the church. We receive grace through these sacraments. For instance, Baptism frees us from original sin; the sacrament of reconciliation ensures forgiveness from sin. Besides, church's prayer, Eucharist and other means give us graces. In the life of the Christians, the Church is the proof of Christ's redeeming presence.

(5) **Serving others:** In his letter Saint James said, "Brothers, what good is it to profess faith without showing works? Such faith has no power to save you" (James 2: 14). Faith without good deed is useless. So, for our redemption, we have to do our best. It is a Christian's duty. At the Last Supper, Jesus washed feet of His disciples. Through this He established an example of service for us all. By our service, we can again achieve our holiness.

Task-1: Enlist the tasks you do to attain salvation.

Task-2: How do people seek God? Make a list in the group and present it.

Exercise

Fill in the blanks

1. Creating human in His image, God gave them ____ desire.
2. Before committing sin ___ a good relationship.
3. Cain killed his own brother ___.
4. All people have good or ___ quality.
5. To establish truth and ___ is not possible for all.

Match column 'A' with column 'B'

A	B
1. Allured by Satan human	• death entered.
2. Because of sin	• we wish to feel the presence of God.
3. In the history of mankind	• we wish to be complete.
4. God is filled with goodness and	• this relationship was destroyed.
5. Through all our work	• love.
	• disobeyed God.

Multiple choice questions

1. Who killed Abel?
   a. Adam
   b. Cain
   c. Abraham
   d. Jacob
2. Why does good relationship decline?
   a. because of sin
   b. for lack of communication
   c. for not giving importance to others
   d. for evil

Read the following text and answer questions no. 3 and 4

In childhood, Milon was very sober and mild. Coming to high school, he mingled with the naughty boys and became disobedient to parents. He doesn't study or say prayers regularly. His behaviour makes it clear that he has grown lazy. As a consequence he failed in the annual examination.

3. Which nature influenced Milon to take the wrong path?
   a. unawareness
   b. impatience
   c. nature of sinner
   d. immoral haviour
4. Because of Milon's such livelihood, he--
   i. became scared of God
   ii. deprived of divine grace
   iii. lost the Holy blessing.

Which one is correct?
   a. i
   b. i and ii
   c. ii and iii
   d. i, ii and iii

Creative questions

1. Veronica was brought up in a poor family. She had to struggle hard for study. She prays regularly, goes to church, decorates alter, read the biography of saints and feels happy to lead a sacred life. Her parents wanted to marry her off but she did not agree because it will not admit her to help the people of the church. She wants to respond to God's call and stand by the poor with the feeling of humanity. On the other hand her younger brother Sujon was very fond of comfortable life.

He doesn't like to suffer and often disobeys his parents. Once he fell sick. Veronica advised him to give up the wrong way and to be good.

a. Who provoked man to disobey God?

b. Before falling in sin, how was the life of man? Describe.

c. Discuss by which work Veronica wishes to fulfill God's teaching.

d. "Confession and repentance have cured Sujan." Do you agree with it? Give your opinion.

2. Raju lost his father at an early age. His father and uncles had disputes over land much before his father's death which ultimately led to his father's heart attack. In his father's absence, Raju struggled very hard to earn some daily food. On top of that it was difficult for him to be present and manage court fee 1 or 2, times a month. To get rid of this trouble, he requested his uncles to give up the cases and get back to peaceful life. He prayed to God to overcome this trouble. By dint of his talent and mild behavior, Raju managed to solve all these problems.

a. What have we learnt from Adam and Eve?

b. How can we establish truth in this conflict ridden world?

c. In the light of the passage, describe why Raju had to struggle at an early age.

d. "Raju feels the presence of resurrected Christ in his struggling life" --- give your opinion about this statement.

Answer briefly

a. How did we learn about the original sin?

b. Why did God rely on human?

c. Why do people search for God?

Essay type questions

1. Describe the struggle of human due to their fall.
2. What is the way to redemption?
3. How would you keep faith in God in all situations of life?

Chapter Five

Principal Themes of the Preaching of Jesus

Jesus came to this world to redeem the human race according to the plan of His Father. Through His preaching and miracles, Jesus taught various things. His teachings have the direction to lead a life of beauty, truth, equality, justice, peace and love. Through His words, He prepared man for redemption. This chapter will highlight the original essence of the words of Jesus.

People gathered around Jesus

At the end of the chapter, we will be able to:

- narrate the main themes of Jesus' preaching ;
- discuss the Kingdom of God, the Ten Commandments, Beatitudes, Last Judgment ;
- talk about resurrection of the dead ;
- describe the Temple of Jerusalem ;
- tell the Law of the Jews ;
- describe commands and mission of the Holy Spirit, and inseparability of marriage trust in the words of Jesus and ;
- take part in the mission of Jesus as much as possible for us.

Lesson - 1: Kingdom of God

All human work has a goal. A work without a goal cannot be called a human work. The education that we are getting now has its goal. For example, this education will help us growing up as full-fledged human person, we will work for the country, we will show other people the way to better life, and so on and so forth. All our activities like eating, resting, playing, obeying the elders etc. have their goals.

Jesus Christ also came to this world with a specific goal - to redeem all the nations of the world. He came to spread the Kingdom of God through love, service, forgiveness, compassion, sympathy, equality, justice and peace. So, He boldly said that the Kingdom of God is at hand. He wanted people to change their mind and prepare for entering into heaven. Jesus is the one who introduced the Kingdom of God in this world and it is through Him that one day this Kingdom will be fulfilled.

But many people misunderstood Jesus. They considered Him to be just an earthly king and His kingdom to be an earthly one. So, His disciples James and John requested Him to let them sit on His right and left when He governed His Kingdom. They failed to understand that God's Kingdom is equally for all and everyone has the right to be member of it. There is no question of who will be on the right or who will be on the left. We all are equal there. In that Kingdom we are all kings and at the same time, we are subjects of the King.

Task: We all sing together the Tagore's song:"We are all kings in our King's Kingdom".

Lesson - 2: The Ten Commandments

Rules and regulations make people disciplined. They help people to lead a beautiful and simple life. For this reason, all societies have certain rules and regulations. These help them to live disciplined and peaceful life.
In the beginning, when He created the universe, God gave us some natural laws. On Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the Ten Commandments for the Israelites. We have already learnt about them and their explanations.

Task: One by one, five students will tell the Ten Commandments from their memory.

Jesus summarized the Ten Commandments and said that there are two central commandments. Thus He explained the inner meaning of the Ten Commandments. He said that we should love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our might, with all our mind and with all our strength. And at the same time, we must love our neighbours as ourselves. Therefore, it is clear that Jesus gave fulfillment to the Ten Commandments by two kinds of loves: love for God and love for the neighbours. Love is the one that is in the center of everything. All of the Ten Commandments can be observed through these two kinds of loves. It is through love that we can come to God and at the same time we can stand beside our brothers and sisters. For this reason Jesus asked us to love each other.

Task: Discuss in groups how we can lead our life according to the Ten Commandments.

Lesson - 3: The Beatitudes

Everybody wants to be happy. If we carefully observe activities and lifestyles of the individuals, we will find that the aim of everyone's life is to be happy. It seems that all are living their lives to be happy in their lives. But we need to know that all kinds of happiness are not permanent. Happiness can be worldly and heavenly. Worldly happiness lies in the pleasure and luxury. All these are sensual. On the other. hand the heavenly pleasure can be achieved by sacrificing life for each other. We enjoy it by heart and preserve it for the next world. Jesus, in the beginning of His preaching described about some of the ways to achieve the heavenly pleasure. They are eight in number and also known as the Beatitudes.

The Sermon on the Mount:

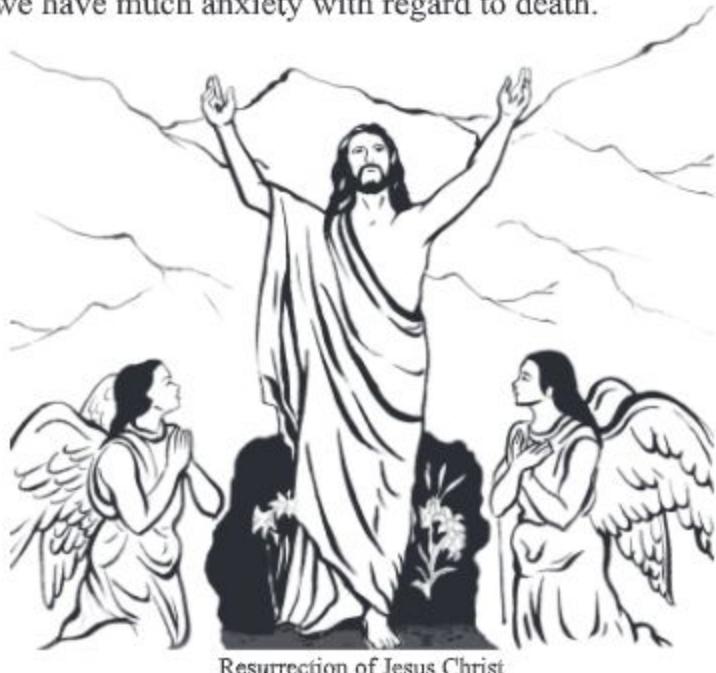
1. Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the kingdom of heaven belongs to them!
2. Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them!
3. Happy are those who are humble, they will receive what God has promised!
4. Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires; God will satisfy them fully!

5. Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them!
6. Happy are the poor in heart; they will see God!
7. Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them children.
8. Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them.

Through the Beatitudes Jesus showed the way to happiness in this world and in the other world. By living life according to the Beatitudes, we will be able to attain peace of mind and spread it among all.

Lesson - 4: The Last Judgment

Human beings are either rewarded or punished for their deeds in this world; they see this reward or punishment either in this world or in the next world. People will build their future in this world. They will be judged according to their works. We, all the Christians believe in The Last Judgment. According to the teaching of the Christianity, the Last Judgment is sure to happen.

On the Last Judgment, the Son of Man will come as King and all the Angels with Him, He will sit on the royal throne, and the people of all the nations will be gathered before Him. Then He will divide them into two groups, just as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the righteous people on His right and the others on His left. Then the King will say to the people on His right, 'Come you that are blessed by my Father! Come and possess the Kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world. I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me.

Then He will say to those on his left, Away from me, you that are under God's curse. Away to the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels! I was a stranger but you did not welcome me in your homes, naked but you did not clothe me. I was sick and in prison but you did not take care of me. These, then, will be sent off to eternal punishment but the righteous will go to eternal life.

So, it is clear to us that all of us must face the judgment day. We will be judged by the charity that we have shown to our brothers and sisters, to the least ones.

Task: Enlist the activities to gain eternal life.

Lesson - 5: The Rising of the Dead

We have come to this world and a day will come when we will have to leave it. We have to leave behind all our near and dear ones. Since no one desires death, a question may arise in our mind: Why is there death? What happens after death? What is our destination? A kind of anxiety works behind all these questions. That is why, we have much anxiety with regard to death.

Resurrection of Jesus Christ

We believe in the resurrection of the dead. Jesus died and after three days He resurrected. By rising from the dead, He promised us that one day, we also will rise. In His preaching life, He taught us about it. The Jews believed about it but the Sadducees did not. Once, in response to a question of the Sadducees, He told very clearly that, there is resurrection. After the resurrection, we will not remain like the people of this earth, rather we will be like the heavenly angels. For these reasons, the disciples could not first recognize Jesus after His resurrection. Jesus said, "God is of the living, not of the dead". One day all of us will rise. Through death, we will be united with God. That is why death for the Christians should not cause sufferings but happiness.

Lesson - 6: The Temple of Jerusalem

People of all religions make a place for their worship. Muslims have mosques, Hindus have temples, Buddhists have pagodas and Christians have churches. All these places bear the signs of the Creator's presence.

During the time of Jesus Christ, the Temple of Jerusalem was the centre of the Jewish worship. At different occasions and festivals, they used to gather there. Jesus was also respectful towards that temple. Forty days after His birth, Joseph and Mary dedicated Him in that temple. At the age of twelve, He was lost in the Temple and later, He was found again. This event reminds us that, He would be busy with His Father's duty. Every year during the Sabbath day, He used to go to the Temple.

This place is the house of God where all the religious people will come and pray. Once when He found the traders turned that place into a marketplace, He drove them away, turning down their things. He never allowed its purity gets spoilt.

Jesus also said about the body-temple. He said that our bodies are temples of God. He said about demolishing the temple (heart) and in three days build a new one. Many people misunderstood Him but He made the Temple of Jerusalem as His Centre for preaching. This is the place where He totally surrendered Himself to the will of His Father.

Lesson - 7: The Law of the Jews

All the religions have their respective rules and regulations. Through sincerely observing those, the followers of that particular religion express their loyalty. Actually, by observing those religious laws people can be guided to remain in good path and come closer to God.

There were many obligatory laws for Jewish people. Many people thought Jesus had come to annul all those laws. But he Himself said, "Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teaching of prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true. Remember that so long as heaven and earth last, not the least point nor the smallest detail of the law will be done away with, what is supposed to happen before that, will happen. So then, whoever disobeys even the least important of the commandments and teaches others to do the same, will be least in the Kingdom of Heaven. On the other hand, whoever obeys the Law and teaches others to do the same, will be great in the Kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 5: 17-19)

Jesus Christ has asked us to be more sincere in observing the laws in order to achieve the real goals of the religion. His teachings are stricter in this respect. He said, "You have heard that people were told in the past, 'Do not commit murder anyone, who does will be brought to trial'. But now, I tell you: whoever is angry with his brother will be brought to trial; whoever calls his brother 'You good for nothing!' will be brought before the Council; and whoever calls his brother a worthless fool will be in danger of going to the fire of hell". (Matthew 5: 21-22)

Through Jesus, everything got completion. Therefore, those who observe the laws and teach others to do the same will be considered great in the Kingdom of Heaven. These laws help us to enter into the eternal life. The Jews used to observe them literally. Jesus gave them internal and spiritual meanings. Jesus' law is the law of love.

Task: Discuss in groups, why laws should be observed.

Lesson 8: Peace

Everyone longs for peace. He struggles just for a little bit of peace or happiness. Many of them cross a long away to find peace.

Jesus is the 'King of Peace'. Thousands of years before His birth, different prophets prophesied of peace and termed Him in this name. He is the 'Supreme Counselor" King of universal peace.

In His preaching, He spread peace among people. He said, "I am leaving peace for you, it is my own peace". After resurrection, He appeared to his disciples and said, "Peace be with you". Yet the peace given by Jesus is different than given by this word. It is of sacrifice and giving by which we all may have peace.

Jesus has reconciled man with God and made the church the symbol of this unity, because He Himself has come on earth to bring peace. He declared, "Happy are those who work for peace, they shall be called children of God".

Task: Enlist the steps that should be taken to ensure peace at home and in school.

Lesson-9: The Poor

Jesus started his preaching on the mountain by saying, "Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them!" In spite of being the Son of God, He came into this world in a very simple way. He was born of a very simple virgin called Mary. She gave birth to Him in a manger in a very poor situation.

Jesus came to the earth in a very simple way to proclaim good news to the poor. At the Synagogue of Nazareth, He read from the book of Isaiah and declared clearly about His arrival, "The Spirit of God is upon me, because He has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed". (Luke 4: 18) He had chosen His apostles from the poor people. The people whom he had

shown hope were the deprived, the tortured, the poor, the persecuted, the widows, the sick, the cripples. He said that the truth of eternal life has been revealed to poor and simple people to make the wise ashamed. He asked everyone to be like little children. If we cannot be like little children, we will not be able to enter into the eternal life.

Lesson - 10: The Message and Mission of the Holy Spirit

While leaving the world. Jesus promised to his disciples that He would not leave them orphans. He will send the true Spirit who will lead them to the path of truth. His message will guide them and His power will help them in spreading the Good News to the people.

Whenever the Father sends His Word, He also sends his Spirit with it. Through His Son, the Word of God came to us. The Holy Spirit makes us understand that although the Son and the Spirit are different, they are undivided. We find Christ in both visible and invisible ways but the Holy Spirit Himself reveals it. Jesus said when you have to face the rulers and the leaders in the synagogues how would you protect yourself? You should not worry about it. At that moment, what you have to say will be taught by the Holy Spirit. His words will be the guiding force. This Spirit will make us children of God. His work is to join us with God and help live a Christian life.

Task: Prepare a report on the Apostolic work that your parish is involved in.

Lesson - 11: The Inseparability of Marriage

The blessing of marriage is held between a female and a male. They take a vow to stay together for the rest of their lives. Priest remains the witness. God Himself brings them together. For this reason they stay together. Only death can separate them, nothing else.

God has created male and female so that they may live together and be complete. By creating male and female and by the sacrament of marriage, God has shown the deepest love. God Himself is the one who formulate this love between a male and female. Marriage is not merely a social or cultural contract. Marriage is not to be broken but to be everlasting contract. Scripture reminds us that, "They are not two, but one body".

Jesus has attached importance to the conjugation of love in married life. He took part in a marriage ceremony with his mother at Cana. His presence discloses that wedding would be the sign of Christ's presence. The original plan of God to unite man and woman has been taught by Jesus Christ. He did not impose anything tougher than the Law of Moses. He said, "Let no one separate what God has joined".

Exercise

Fill in the blanks

1. We believe in ___ of death.
2. The temple is ___ house.
3. God's law is ___ law.
4. Christ is___.
5. Jesus has ___the love of conjugal life.

Match column 'A' with column 'B'

A	B
1. The words of Holy Spirit would be	• the kingdom of God is yours!
2. Happy are the poor	• is for all.
3. The words of Holy Spirit	• the power of spreading gospel.
4. God's Kingdom	• love your God and neighbour.
5. With all your heart and soul	• will be the guide.
	• has told about the love.

Multiple choice questions

1. Jesus was resurrected after--
   a. two days b. three days
   c. four days d. five days

2. How can we be close to God?
   a. through love b. through blessing
   c. through donation d. by following rules

Read the following text and answer questions no. 3 and 4

Mithun is weak in study but he is God fearing and helpful. Very easily, he gets close, solves the conflict with others, and works for the down-trodden. Observing him, many are encouraged to work for the society.

3. What does Mithun's work reflect?

   a. worldly kingdom   b. God's kingdom

   c. spreading power   d. nurturing the creation

4. Mithun wishes to establish -

   i. love, welfare

   ii. forgiveness, peace

   iii. affection, sympathy

5. Which of the following is correct?

   a. i   b. ii

   c. i and iii   d. i, ii and iii

Creative questions

1. Apu and Topu are the children of rich family. Apu is disobedient, neglects study, comes back late at home, does not read the Holy Bible and does not say prayers. On the other hand, Topu prays regularly and fears God, helps and serves others. Observing him, Apu repents and changes his mind. Now both of them live a simple life, eat plain food and wear dress decently. Both of them pray and help the poor, the helpless, and the widows. They spread Good News to the sick people. They started to work for the actual truth of Gospel among the common people. So people started growing spiritually.

   a. For whom the God's kingdom is?

   b. How can we get pleasure?

   c. Where do Apu and Topu live?

   d. In the light of the text, evaluate the statement that the light of God has influenced them.

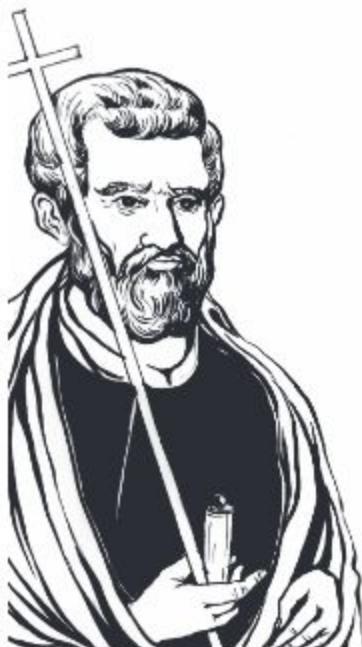
2. Sanjit always speaks the truth, because he fears God. Regularly, he reads the Bible and says prayer. He helps his destitute neighbours by giving money, food, dress and counseling. He comes forward if anyone falls sick and takes them to hospital. Seeing his enthusiasm, the parish priest told Sanjit "God bless you". (you may prosper) But he always considered himself smaller.

   a. Who will sit at God's right side on the day of Last Judgement?

   b. Why do we believe in resurrection?

   c. Explain what's been revealed by Sanjit's work?

   d. What can be the result of Sanjit's work? - Explain.

Answer briefly

1. For which particular work Jesus came to the world?
2. What is the inner meaning of the Ten Commandments?
3. What would you achieve following the ways of pleasure?

Essay type questions

1. Write in your own words about 'The Kingdom of God'.
2. What are the ways to pleasure?.
3. Write about resurrection.

Chapter Six

Peter's Response to Jesus' Calling

Saint Peter

Jesus chose the Twelve as His companions in His work of preaching. He called them and they also became disciples by responding to that call. He named them as disciples or apostles because they were sent to everywhere in the world. Saint Peter was the chief among the apostles. In this chapter, we would try to be beloved disciples of Jesus by elaborately discussing the calling and response of Saint Peter and by following the example set by Saint Peter.

At the end of the chapter, we will be able to:

- explain the calling of Peter and his response to Jesus' calling ;
- describe the delegated responsibilities upon Peter by Jesus ;
- describe Peter as the founder of the Christian Church ;
- describe the story of becoming witness of the resurrection ;
- explain Peter's power and right of leading ;
- explain Peter's confession as Messiah.

Lesson 1: Peter's Calling and Response

Jesus has come into this world for fulfilling the redemption-plan of God, the Father. He let all know the message of redemption and called them so that all may walk in the righteousness shown by Him. He has exhibited the path of the Kingdom of Heaven. The work of preaching this message was not an easy one. He even had to sacrifice His life for this. But he clearly told, He is the way, the truth and the life. None can go to the Father except through Him.

During his life time, Jesus nominated some of his followers for preaching. Before sending them for perching, he transfigured them. He disclosed the mystery of the Heavenly Kingdom to these childlike innocent disciples. Jesus gifted His disciples with His Spirit so that they could preach about His relief to the people of all corners of the world after His death and resurrection. These messengers became mighty with the power of this Holy Spirit. They could ignore all their sufferings and fears. Then they dispersed everywhere to preach and bore the testimony of Jesus' death and resurrection. Still today, since we have this Holy Spirit with us, we are called and sent to bear the testimony of Jesus.

These twelve apostles came to close connection with Jesus in different times and situations. Perhaps they were known to each other from childhood since they were from the same locality. On the other hand, Jesus might become known to them for His missing in the temple, conversation with the scribes, and the miracle He performed at a wedding house in Cana. The disciples would perhaps know Jesus as audience of these events. Some might even hear about Jesus from John the Baptist. As a result, the willingness to see Jesus or becoming closer to Jesus was already implanted in their hearts.

At that time, small cities or residences were built near the seashore. And Jesus preached His message by traveling these cities and ports of the seashore. Boats, boatmen, fishermen were the means of Jesus preaching. The inward desire of the disciples of seeing Jesus was fulfilled when Jesus' went to preach in their own areas. As a result, they met Jesus directly. Peter was also among them. There the final call for becoming His disciples was offered. Saint Luke wrote this excellent incident in the Gospel written by him.

The fishermen could not catch any fish in their nets through the whole night (Luke 5: 1-12). For them that night was very bad and tiresome. Peter jumped near Jesus when he saw Him in the shore that morning. They shared about their adventure as a failure. In that situation, Jesus told Peter, "Take your nets to the deep sea and caste your nets." The command of Jesus seemed illogical since they failed and became tired after the whole night. Even though there was hesitation in him, Peter obeyed Jesus for deep trust and confidence upon Him. They cast their nets in the sea. What a surprise! There were so many fish that the nets were almost torn! They had to ask for help from other fishermen and huge fish were caught.

The disciples saw in their own eyes what they heard about Jesus before. That was really a miracle. They became surprised. There was more wonder when they heard Jesus' calling as "From now on, you would catch only men." A wonderful event happened in the lives of the fishermen. They did not only catch fish. Now their lives have been caught by Jesus. They were no more the fishermen of fish, rather became catches of men. That meant, from then on they became the companions of the missionary life of Jesus. The wonderful incident was that, they became the companions of Jesus but forsaking their nets, boats, fish, parents, relatives and everything they had. Peter was among them.

What a wonderful power did Jesus have! How easily he freed Peter from his daily routine works and appointed him in the service of God. Peter's mind was attracted by the word and eye-sight of Jesus. He did not have any chance to flee from there. That was an excellent calling - a spiritual calling; the calling for serving God Himself. Peter started following Jesus by leaving everything to respond to that calling.

Task: Play a drama on the event of Peter's response to Jesus' calling.

Lesson 2: Delegation and the Foundation of the Church

Saint Peter was from Bethsaida of the province of Galilee. His another name was Simon. Jesus named Simon as Peter, which means "rock". The name of Simon Peter was Jonah. Andrew was his other brother who later became Jesus' disciple. They were fishermen by profession. Peter and Andrew used to catch fish in sea with James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Jesus healed the mother-in-law of Peter, from which, we might conclude that Peter was married. But whether his wife was alive or dead, there was no indication.

Simon Peter was the chief one, among those whom Jesus called. Jesus suddenly called Peter while fishing in the sea. Peter became the chief of the disciple-group by responding to Jesus' call.

Once Jesus wanted to check the disciples, so he asked them to say what people said about who Jesus was. After having their answer, He asked them what they themselves think about Jesus. Peter among the disciples uttered, "You are the Savior, the Son of the living God." (Matt 16: 13-20). Peter was the one among the disciples, who could know Jesus as Savior and confessed accordingly. That was not an ordinary matter. Saint Peter upheld a deep truth on faith. Peter expressed the redemption plan of God, the Father; he confessed his deep faith upon Jesus through this. He has also expressed the true identity of Jesus through this. Jesus became happy by Peter's answer. He commended Peter with thanks and blessed him. He justified the name of Peter as rock. He chose Peter and told, "You Peter, and I will build my church upon you. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosen in heaven." (Matt 16: 17-20).

Jesus is handing over the key of the Kingdom of Heaven to Peter

While the judgement of Jesus was going on in the pillat building, Peter denied three times in response to the question of a maid servant. It revealed that Peter still had a weak faith on Jesus. Jesus once questioned Peter for purifying his faith, "Peter, do you love me?" Jesus asked Peter this same question three times. And Peter answered three times, "Yes Lord, I love you." In response, Jesus told, "Take care of my sheep." (John 21: 15-17).

Jesus equipped Peter slowly through these conversations so that he could accept the responsibility. A huge task was handed over to Peter. Jesus delegated this great task for his faith and confession on Jesus. "Take care of my sheep" - that was a big task which was delegated upon him.

Peter became the chief of the disciples and leader of the church. Peter was the first Pope of the church. The keys of the Kingdom of Heaven was offered only to Peter. Peter was the witness of many works of Jesus. All the disciples could not go too close to Jesus but only Peter and two other disciples were with Jesus. As for example, during Jesus' transfiguration in the mountain and Jesus' remorse in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him.

In Gebsony, Peter took three of his followers with him while saving the dead daughter of Myris. Peter was a good speaker. Peter advanced in different situations and spoke as spokesman of the disciples. Many times, Peter replied to different questions of Jesus. Peter could not give right answer. So there was weakness in his faith. He was almost drowned while walking on water. Peter resisted Jesus when He was washing the feet of the disciples. Peter cut the ear of a soldier by his sword during Jesus' arrest in Gethsemane. Peter refused Jesus to a slave woman three times for fear of his life.

We see the faith of Peter as weak in some areas. Once Jesus was walking upon water. Peter told, permit me so that I may walk upon water and come nearer to you. Jesus agreed. But in the middle of the way, Peter began to drown. Jesus then told him, "You of little faith. Why did you doubt?" (Matthew 14: 31). Jesus equipped him instead of the weakness of his faith. He provided him strength and courage and as a result on the day of Pentecost, Peter delivered strong message on the resurrection of Jesus and accused Pharisees. Five thousand men became believers and were Baptized. Peter as the chief of the church upheld his faith and preached about Jesus until his death. He became the foundation of the church by properly fulfilling his delegated responsibility.

Task: Prepare a list of the places in the Bible where Saint Peter preached the message.

Lesson 3: Saint Peter as the Witness of the Resurrection

Saint Peter became not only the foundation of the church, but he was also the witness of the resurrected Christ. Saint John described in the Gospel that, Saint Peter was the first entering into the empty tomb of Jesus (John 20: 1-9). Although John saw the empty grave before Peter saw, he did not enter there. As the chief and foundation of the church, he waited for Peter and offered the opportunity first to Peter.

After Jesus' resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples several times and Peter was present in all of Jesus' appearances. Peter understood the message of the resurrection before His death, and that became a reality now. Peter believed that Jesus really resurrected.

Saint Paul, in his different epistles preached the resurrection of Jesus. He expressed everywhere that Jesus appeared first to Peter and then to other disciples and then appeared to many men. Saint John, in the last chapter of his Gospel, wrote on the nice conversation between Peter and the resurrected Jesus. Peter refused Jesus three times. In reverse to three refusals, Peter confessed three time that he loved Jesus. And Jesus reminded Peter three times, "Take care of my sheep." As the chief of the church, Jesus reminded the responsibilities and duties to Peter.

Peter obeyed the commands of the resurrected Jesus by the expense of his life. He took the leadership of the church. He led the selection process of choosing Matthias in place of Judas Iscariot. Since the number of devotees grew rapidly in the early church, the disciples were spending most of their time in the distribution of food. Their preaching became slow. So under the leadership of Peter, the disciples chose seven deacons for social work. Peter delivered lectures as their spokesman in different events. Such as, Peter was the first one delivered his lecture on the day of the dissension of the Holy Spirit. Then he did not have any fear. Peter resolved any conflict raised among the disciples. Peter was imprisoned for preaching about the resurrection. But due to his faith, he was miraculously freed from the prison. Saint Peter performed many miracles in the name of the resurrected Christ. Once one crippled beggar begged to Peter in front of the entrance door of the temple. Peter replied,"I have neither silver nor gold, but I give you just what I have. I say in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise and walk." Immediately the crippled man became healed.

Once Peter had a weak faith, but now he became strong through his meeting with the resurrected Christ. On the day of the Pentecost, he delivered his lecture with courage and preached about the story of Resurrected Christ. That day three thousand men believed Christ and were Baptized by his preaching. He taught about faith as the chief of the whole church. He even preached up to Rome. At last, Saint Peter sacrificed his life on the cross. Saint Peter chose the death of anguish following his master and sacrificed his own life to safeguard the faith.

Task: Share with the group about the things of Peter's life which inspire you.

Exercise

Fill in the Blanks

1. St. Peter was the chief among the ___.
2. Jesus involved Peter in the service of God by freeing him from the daily __.
3. Peter was a ___.
4. __ people became believers through receiving sacrament after hearing the speech of Peter.
5. Peter was the ___ Pope of the church.

Match column 'A' with column 'B'

A	B
1. The words of Jesus' mouth, the eye-sight	• preached on the resurrection.
2. Peter in response to Jesus' calling became	• attracted the mind of Peter.
3. Peter as the chief of the church	• embraced the faith.
4. Peter denied Jesus	• three times.
5. St. Paul in his different letters	• the chief of the disciple-team.
	• confessed that he loved Jesus

Multiple choice questions

1. How many companions did Jesus choose for his preaching ministry?
   a. Three persons b. Four persons
   c. Ten persons d. Twelve persons
2. The phrase "Take your nets to the deep sea" means --
   a. Spiritual calling
   b. The calling of becoming skilled fisherman
   c. The calling to become obedient
   d. The calling to be humble

Read the following text and answer questions no. 3 and 4

The father of Manik is in bed for his sickness. He realized that he would not live long. So he called four of his children to distribute his property and explained their responsibilities and duties. He advised his eldest son to take care of all the other brothers and to stand beside them in their need. Because he saw the way Manik was condoling the whole family after his mother's death, the father was sure that Manik would come forward to help in any kind of family problem.

3. What could be the result of taking responsibility by Manik?

   a. The development in relationship b. The increase of dependence

   c. The growth of mental power d. Being strong in morality

4. Which virtue of Peter is seen in Manik?

   i. Sense of responsibility

   ii. Trustworthiness

   iii. Faithfulness

Which one is correct?

   a. i b. iii

   c. i and ii d. ii and iii

Creative questions

1. **Stimulator - 1 :** Prodip is a priest. The villagers give attention to his words very eagerly and apply in their works. The astrayed people of the village repent and return in the way of Jesus by obeying the words of the priest.

   Stimulator - 2 : Shamir is a businessman. He has been suffering from illness for a long time. He did not recover even after visiting many doctors. At last, he went to the priest to share everything and the priest advised him by saying, "You would get healed if you put your faith upon God." Then Shamir said, "I have been praying for a long time, but did not see any result."

   a. Who descended upon the disciples in the Day of Pentecost?

   b. Why did St. Peter sacrifice his life on the cross?

   c. Which virtue of Peter flourished in Shomir? Explain.

   d. Do you think that the character of Peter was reflected both in Prodip and Shamir? Give your opinion with reasons.

2. Jibon is a businessman. He could not prosper well in his business. One day, he went to the church and shared everything openly to the priest. The priest gave some advice. He saw good results by following the advice of the priest. Then, he would go to the church regularly, attended prayer. He would take initiative in different religious activities, cooperate others. On seeing this behavior, the priest called him to preach the message of Jesus. Jibon responded to the calling of the priest.

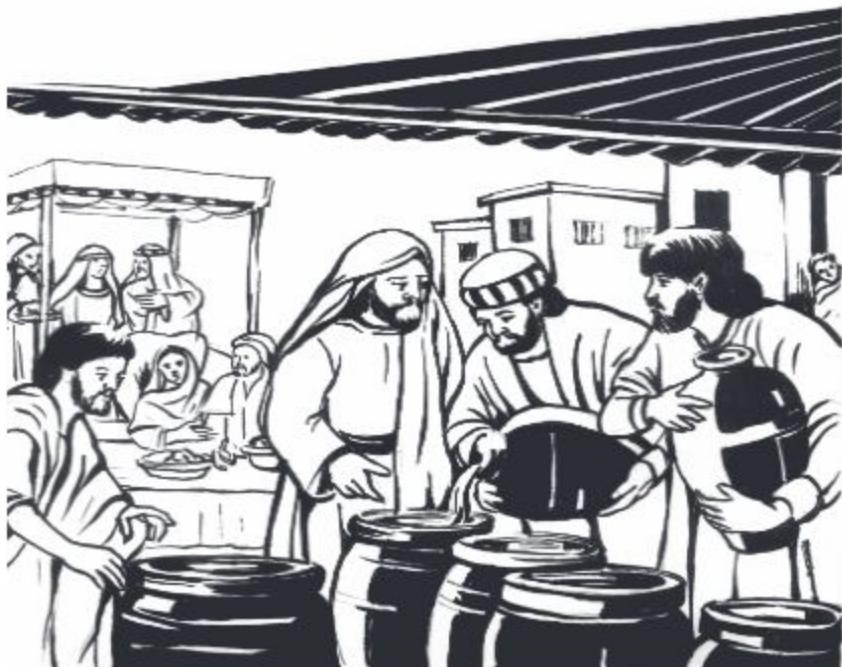
   a. What was the name of Simon Peter?

   b. What do you understand by the word "apostles?"

   c. Which teaching of Jesus was reflected in Jibon? Explain.

   d. Evaluate the saying "Jibon is the reflection of Peter."

Answer briefly

1. What do you mean by "apostles."
2. How did Peter perform miracles?
3. How did Peter preach the word of the resurrected Christ?

Essay type questions

1. Describe the story of Peter's response to Jesus' calling.
2. Describe the religious speech of Peter and its consequences.
3. Analyze the statement "Peter is the witness of the resurrection."

Chapter Seven

Miracles and Divine Kingdom of Jesus

We know about the miracles of the Lord Jesus. We also know that, Jesus Christ has revealed the existence of the Divine Kingdom by His miraculous works. In this chapter, we would learn deeper knowledge about the Divine Kingdom and play the active role in spreading the Divine Kingdom.

The first miracles of Jesus at the wedding house in Cana

At the end of the chapter, we will be able to:

- explain the meaning of the Divine Kingdom;
- describe the parables of Jesus;
- describe the calling of men by Jesus for becoming active in spreading the Divine Kingdom through the miracles written down in 8th and 9th Chapters of Matthew;
- respond to the calling of Jesus in spreading the Divine Kingdom.

Lesson 1: Divine Kingdom

We have heard many stories of different kings and queens, and come to know about their lives and kingdoms through reading books. Any king should have a definite kingdom or land and people, ministers and soldiers. The king always works for protecting his kingdom and takes all measures so that the people may live in happiness and joy. The king has the responsibilities of ruling the whole kingdom. On the other hand, the people have also the responsibilities and duties toward the beauty and prosperity of the land.

Jesus Christ has come into this world to establish a beautiful kingdom where justice, peace, joy, love, forgiveness, fellowship and other special qualities would prevail. God loves all men. So, He wanted to establish that kingdom of love in this world through His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has come into this world to establish the will of the Father. He wanted to establish Divine Kingdom through His serving life and message.

The Difference between Worldly Kingdom and Divine Kingdom

In the beginning we would see some characteristics of the worldly kingdom and then we would see those of the Divine Kingdom. We would be able to do a comparative discussion between these two kingdoms.

The Worldly Kingdom

We understand a definite geographical land or area for worldly kingdom. Whatever is in that geographical land is included in this kingdom. There are qualities like justice, peace, joy, love, etc. in the worldly kingdom. But there are also dominion, greed, selfishness, jealousy, contempt, division, etc. along with the above qualities. Our kingdom or worldly kingdom is with these good or evil aspect.

The Divine Kingdom

The Divine Kingdom is the Kingdom of God. God wanted to establish a kingdom and that is the Divine Kingdom. God has established this Kingdom through Lord Jesus. The Divine Kingdom is not a definite land surrounded with a boundary like the Worldly kingdom. This is the Kingdom of love, joy, justice, forgiveness, fellowship and cooperation. The Lord Jesus Christ has begun His preaching by saying that the Divine Kingdom of God is near. So He called everyone to repent and believe the Gospel. Jesus Christ Himself is the visible symbol of the Divine Kingdom. The full representation of the Divine Kingdom has come only through Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has shown the path of entering into the Divine Kingdom through His message. He did not show the path through His message but he also lived accordingly and has inspired us to live that type of life.

Task: Discuss in a pair how you may work for the Divine Kingdom.

Lesson 2: Parables of Jesus

There are things which cannot be expressed in language. And then the example or parable is used. For example, since the size of the earth cannot be expressed wholly, so parable is used to say that the earth is round like an orange. Jesus has given the parable of the Prodigal Son to mean the limitless forgiveness of the Heavenly Father. Even though the whole meaning is not expressed through using example or parable, still the close meaning of the subject can be possibly given.

The invitation of Jesus Christ to enter into the Divine Kingdom comes through the example or parable, which is characteristically used in His teaching. For that reason, the Lord Jesus Christ has used different symbols or parables to communicate the meaning of His preaching about the Divine Kingdom to common people. He also called to take a decision even though people were invited to attend the feast of the Divine Kingdom. You have to leave all of wealth, relatives, luxury, etc. for entering into the Divine Kingdom.

Different Symbols or Parables

The symbols or parables of Jesus Christ are like mirror for us. These talk about our lives. The Lord Jesus has used many parables or symbols to express the mystery of the Divine Kingdom.

The Parable of Weeds and Wheat

He has compared the Divine Kingdom with the wheat and weeds sown in the soil. A farmer has sown the seed of wheat in his land. But when all were sleeping, the enemy sowed the seed of weeds in the wheat field. Since both the plants of the wheat and weed look alike, both started to grow. When the kernel started to sprout, then the weeds were identified. So the workers informed the master about this. They asked permission to pull the weeds. But the master did not give them permission. He allowed both to grow. Because the master was afraid that the workers would root up the wheat while pulling the weeds, and the wheat harvest would result a loss. He told them to wait until the harvest time came. During the harvest time, he told the harvesters to collect the weeds and burn those and later stock the wheat in the barn.

The Parable of Mustard Seed

To mean the Kingdom of Heaven or the Divine Kingdom, Jesus used the parable of Mustard seed. Once a farmer sowed the mustard seed in his land. The mustard seed is small than other seeds. But its plants grow bigger than others. Then it grows like a big tree. Even the birds of the air may perch on it.

The Parable of Yeast

Jesus used the parable of yeast to mean the Divine Kingdom. He said, "The Divine Kingdom is like that yeast. A woman started to mix it with fifteen kilograms of flour, until all have been fermented".

The Parable of Hidden Treasure and Pearl

Jesus said, "The Divine Kingdom is like treasure hidden under the ground. One man found that and hid that there again. Then he went joyfully and sold everything he had to buy that land".

Again the Kingdom of Heaven is like precious pearl. One merchant was wondering to find precious pearl. As soon as he got one very precious pearl, bought that pearl by selling all whatever he had.

The Parable of Net Full of Fish

The Lord Jesus compared the Divine Kingdom with a net. A net was cast in the sea and all kinds of fishes were caught. When the net was full, the fishermen drew the net up on the shore and there good fish were collected in the basket but the bad ones were thrown away into the sea.

Task: Prepare a list of the symbols about the Divine Kingdom in real life and present that to the classroom.

Lesson 3: Workers of Divine Kingdom

Every able man has to live on some kind of work. As for example, St. Paul said, "All should be settled down and should earn the bread they eat (2 Thessalonians 3: 12)". The Lord Jesus sent His disciples in different places and said, "The worker deserves his wages" (Luke 10: 7). So whoever works is a worker. In this, we all who do our own responsibility and duty are workers. God has sent man into this world with different responsibilities and duties. For that reason, different men live on different kinds of work. We do different kinds of work to live on this world and again we do some works for the after-life. Some of these are for personal necessity and some are for spreading the Divine Kingdom through our different works of service.

There is a great need of workers for the Divine Kingdom. Jesus was saddened by seeing the crowd around Him. They were distressed and tired, like a flock without shepherd. He became compassionate toward them. He said to them, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field" (Matthew 9: 37).

But for working in the Divine Kingdom, Jesus' appeal was different. All are called for this work. But few are elected. Once a teacher of the law came to Jesus and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go. Jesus replied, Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head" (Matthew 8: 19-20). Again another one came to Jesus and told, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father. But Jesus told him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead" (Matthew 8: 21-22).

As soon as Jesus asked Matthew, the tax collector to follow Him, he immediately left the tax office and went with Jesus. Jesus has accepted the invitation at Matthew's house. By seeing that, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law started grumbling about Jesus. Jesus responded, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and then learn what this means: I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For, I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matthew 9: 12-13). So this is seen that, all men are equally called and elected for the work of the Divine Kingdom. But those who already consider themselves holy, they do not have the humility to enter into the Divine Kingdom.

Task: Meditate personally and write about your own experience how you hear the call of Jesus to spread the Divine Kingdom.

Lesson 4: Response to Jesus' Calling

To call means to summon. Man names man to identify man. God calls man by that name. Man calls another man for expecting attention. We focus on someone who calls us. Not only that, we try to respond to his call.

Jesus Christ formed a team of twelve disciples in the beginning of His preaching. He called these twelve as apostles. Apostles meant the ones who were sent. Jesus called them from different professions. On the other hand, many followed Him after hearing His message.

In response to Jesus' call, the first disciples followed Jesus by leaving everything behind. Peter, James, John and Andrew, were fishermen by profession, they left their only belongings boat and nets to their companions and fathers and followed Jesus. The tax collector Matthew, a man of this profession for a long time, followed Jesus after he had left his profession of tax collection, and accepted Jesus and invited Jesus in his home. Not only these twelve followed Him, people in groups joined with Him to listen to his message.

The Selection of the Twelve Apostles

Jesus prayed for the whole night and decided to appoint the Twelve among all of His disciples. Then He chose them. He called the twelve whom He chose. He gave them the power of healing the sick and casting unholy demons. They

were - Simon, who was also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew, James the son of Zebedee and his brother John, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector, James and Thaddaeus, the sons of Alphaeous, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who later handed over Jesus to the enemy.

Our Calling

Like the first disciples, Jesus has been calling us regularly. Like the first disciples, all of us do not have to follow Him by leaving everything. He at this time calls us to live according to his teaching, and to walk in His ways. But this is not easy to live according to His direction. So He said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." He also said, "If anyone loves his father and mother, brothers and sisters and relatives more than me, he is not worthy of me."

Task: Write how you would follow Jesus after realizing your personal call.

Exercise

Fill in the blanks

1. Jesus has come to establish ___ Divine Kingdom by serving life and His message.
2. The Divine Kingdom is the Kingdom of ___.
3. The parables or symbols used by Jesus Christ ___for us.
4. God has created human into this world with different ___.
5. The word 'apostle' means the one who is___.

Match column 'A' with column 'B'

A	B
1. Calling means	• at Matthew's House.
2. For entering into the Divine Kingdom	• by Judas.
3. Both good and bad forms	• needs humility.
4. Jesus was handed over to the hands of enemies	• the Divine Kingdom.
5. Jesus accepted the invitation	• summon.
	• the worldly Kingdom.

Multiple choice questions:

1. What is the symbol of weeds for?
   a. Evil b. Weakness
   c. Peacelessness d. Separation
2. How to enter into the Divine Kingdom?
   a. By accepting the worldly wealth b. By honoring relatives
   c. By sacrificing luxury d. By saving

Read the following text and answer questions no. 3 and 4

Sumona and Mohona going to class IX are good friends. Both are busy in their study and cooperate others. But Rina from the same class as they are, bothers them much, says bad words, dresses herself immodestly and encourages others to do the same. Other students in the class by being influenced by her creates disturbances in the class. When all gave objection against Rina and suggested to expel her from the class, the Headmaster told, "Wait until the result is announced."

3. Which parable does the behavior of the Headmaster teach here?
   a. Net full of fish b. Mustard Seed
   c. Weeds d. Yeast

4. The summary of the saying of the Headmaster in light of the parable is:
   a. The time of the Last Judgment b. The end of the year
   c. The time of announcing result d. The time of arrival

Creative questions

1. Bijoy and his friends collect tolls from people forcibly from the road. In this way, he gathers lots of wealth at his home. Once a priest came to visit his home and said, "Leave these and follow me. You would work for the Lord." Bijoy left all his long-standing works like leaving his collection of tolls and he works with the Priest. Later Bijoy distributed his wealth to the poor. He invited the Priest in his own home. Later he preached among the meek and poor, and to the sad ones and served others.

a. What kind of men are those who hear and obey the message of Jesus?

b. Explain - what does the Divine Kingdom mean?

c. Which area of the character of Matthew, the tax collector has been expressed in the works of Bijoy?

d. Discuss a comparative study between Bijoy and Matthew.

2. The uncle of Anu is a rich man, so his uncle would hate Anu and his family members. His cousins would quarrel with others for the dispute of the land. Anu would wonder why they got involved in such activities. Anu has seen that the Chairman of his village would live with great power, occupy the land of others by force and persecute the poor without any cause. These wrong-doings would hurt Anu. Anu grew older slowly and he restored the houses of the distressed upon his ability, started a medical center for giving health service. In this way, Anu inspires all to walk in good path.

   a. Whose house did Jesus accept for invitation?

   b. Why is the calling of God important in our lives?

   c. The characteristics of which kingdom is seen in the Chairman of Anu's village - explain from the text book.

   d. The characteristics of the Divine Kingdom and the Worldly kingdom are noticeable - give your comments according to the text book.

Answer briefly

1. What is the meaning of the Divine Kingdom?
2. What should we do to follow to the call of Jesus?
3. What is the inner meaning of the parable of the net full of fish?

Essay type questions

1. Compare between the Divine Kingdom and the worldly kingdom.
2. How do we work to spread the Divine Kingdom?
3. Write the parable of the weeds and wheat in your own language.

Chapter Eight
Christian Church

We know that the Christian Church is the Church established by the Christ. Christian devotees live together in loving union centered around Christ. Christian Church is the expression of cordial union of men. In this chapter, we would learn about the existing close and intimate relationship of Christian Church with Christ. We would try to know the relationship of the body with Christ as the Head by comparing the head and other organs of human body. We would also discuss how we could be organs of this church.

At the end of the chapter, we will be able to:

- describe the church as the body of Christ;
- explain the role of Christ as the Head of Christian Church;
- analyze the role of the Christian devotees as the organs of the Body of Christ;
- perform our own responsibilities as inevitable organs of the church.

Lesson 1: Christian Church as One Body

Each one of us knows more or less about our own body. As human, we have one body. How nicely God has created our body! He placed each part exactly where it should be. Our body is one, but with many organs. All organs are connected to the body.

Task: Draw a picture of a human body in your own note book so that the picture could be used to represent the Christian church. Which part of the church would you like to be and what kind of work you would like to do if you could become that part?

The Body of Christ

Christian church is the body of Christ. Whoever is connected with Him after responding to His call, they are very closely united with Him. Whoever believes in Christ, the life of Him flows into his body-mind-spirit. The Christian church becomes invisibly but realistically linked with the sufferings of Christ and glory through the holy sacraments. Christian church is associated with the death and resurrection of Christ through the sacrament of Baptism. Through the sacrament of the Lord Supper, the Christian church receives the Body of Christ practically. Through this, the Christian church becomes united in a bond with Christ and each other. Jesus said, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood, he dwells in me and I live in his heart".

This unity of the devotees of the Christian church with Christ as body generates brotherly love and revives all to live in this love or the bond of unity. St. Paul said after comparing this unity with human body that our body is one but there are many parts and all parts consist of the body. So in this way, all of us become the parts of the same body through the Baptism by the same power of the Holy Spirit. So the source of us is one. We are one in Christ. For that reason, he said, "Remain in me, and I will remain in you. I am the vine, you are the branches." (John 15: 4-5).

Task: Make a list of the works which we do by using our head and then present the report from each group. Write in a paper all the names of the works from the report and hang in the wall.

Lesson 2: Christ as the Head of the Body

There is a chief or first part in everything. That could be in terms of number. And that could be in the area of importance or role. Father or mother is the head of the family. His or her role as head of the family is huge. The head is the chief part of human body. This may not be possible to say all the works the head does for human body.

The Head of the Church is Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church. He is superior to all in His Father's glory for His connection with the Father. Christ gathers us in the mystery of His deliverance. For this reason, we enter into the mystery of His life. We have been joined with His sufferings through our connection with Christ as the Head. We have partaken into the fellowship of sufferings so that we can be glorified in His glory.

Christ is the head of church

We can grow through joining with Christ as the Head. For that reason, He gives different gifts and cooperation to church as His body. We proceed to have salvation through that cooperation. We help each other. In this way, Christ as the Head and church as the body build the whole Christ.

Task: Show a relationship of the works of the head you have found in group discussion with Christ as the Head of the church.

Lesson 3: Different Organs of the Body

There are different parts in human body. Each part has different function. St. Paul said that our body is not made with only one organ. There are many organs in the body. The works of these different parts of human body are also different. God did not place all organs in one place. He has placed the organs in different fitting and proper positions according to His choice. One part is not less than another in terms of importance. None of the organs can say that it does not need the other. If one part experiences pain, all the parts are in pain. On the other hand, if one part is honored or delighted, other parts also become delighted.

Task: Prepare a list of the works we do by our eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands, feet through group discussion and present the report by one from each group and hang in the wall.

The Parts of the Church

Like the human body, the Christian church is one body and like the parts of the body, each devotee is a part of the church. St. Paul said, "Those God places in different positions in the church, the first among them are apostles, then prophets, then teachers; then there are those whom He has given the power of doing miracles or the power of healing or special gift to help others or special power of leadership or the power of speaking in other languages, again to others the power of interpreting other languages". So this is true that God has created human with different gifts. God wants man to be faithful to those gifts and work accordingly. Each one has to accomplish the work for which he or she has been given or whom He has sent for into this world.

Task: Show the relationship of the different parts of the church with the functions of the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands, feet etc. you have found in your group discussion.

Exercise

Fill in the blanks

1. The Christian Church is the representation of ___ union of man with Christ.
2. Our body is one but there are many ___ of it.
3. One can come into the fellowship of the death and resurrection of ___Christ through the sacrament of Baptism.
4. In that way all of us have become the parts of the same body through the ___ in the same power of the Holy Spirit.
5. So our ___ is one.

Match column 'A' with column 'B'

A	B
1. God so marvelously	• the body of Christ
2. All parts are	• the head
3. The chief or master of a family is	• made of only one part.
4. The head of human body is	• has created our body
5. St. Paul said that our body was not	• the father or mother
	• connected with the body

Multiple choice questions

1. What is Christian church?
   - a. The Body of Christ
   - b. The Spirit of the Trinity
   - c. The house of Christian devotees
   - d. The Pastoral center

2. Through which sacrament, does the Christian church become united with the death and resurrection of Christ?
   - a. The Sacrament of Baptism
   - b. Marriage
   - c. The Priestly Garment
   - d. Healing

Read the following text and answer questions no. 3 and 4

Both of the parents of Shuma are professionals. Her father, who also cooperates in different works of the church, is involved with different organizations and cooperatives. He can solve the problems efficiently. For these reasons, his decision in any matter of the family is considered as the final decision and opinion.

3. What is expressed through the role of Shuma's father?
   - a. The role of Christ
   - b. The contribution of the family
   - c. The role of the priest
   - d. The contribution of the church

4. Through accepting the decision of Shuma's father, all in the family receive--
   - i. Prosperity
   - ii. Salvation
   - iii. Cooperation

Which one is correct?

a. i
b. i and ii
c. ii and iii
d. i, ii and iii

Creative questions

1. The Headmaster of a school is well informed about the efficiency of work and ability of all teachers. He delegates all responsibilities of the school to all according to their ability. Sometimes, he gives more responsibilities to one or two teachers. For this, the teachers delegated become dissatisfied and tell the Headmaster, "Why are others assigned less responsibilities, aren't they also the teachers of this institution?" The Headmaster says, "The school is a social institution and all are the members of the same family. All of the family members do not perform the same job. Each one has different responsibilities. So all in the family are equally important."

    1. Who could be identified as the Head of the Christian Church?
    2. "I am the vine, you are the branches" - Explain the statement.
    3. Which area of the Christian Church is expressed through different responsibilities of the teachers?
    4. "The catalyst teachers are like organs of the church." - Evaluate the quotation.

Answer briefly

1. What does Christian Church mean?
2. Why is Christ the Head of the Christian Church?
3. How does the Christian Church become united with the death and resurrection of Christ?

Essay type questions-

1. Explain the role of Christ as the Head of the Christian Church.
2. Analyze the role of the Christian devotees as different parts of the Body of Christ.
3. Describe in your own language how one could be interested to perform one's own responsibilities as the inevitable part of the Church.

Chapter Nine
Justice, Peace and Self-Control

We need a Christian society enriched with human, moral and religious virtues in the age of flourishing human civilization and globalization. Justice is a need for a universally global community on Christian faith for living a life as shown by Jesus and through building model Christian family. We must co-exist with all others for building the society of justice, for the need of peaceful life leading and for this, self-control must be demonstrated among all. If we grow with these virtues, our personal lives and societal environment would be full of happiness, which is expected by all.

The balance is the symbol of justice

At the end of the chapter, we will be able to:

- explain the idea of justice ;
- describe the teaching on justice in the Holy Bible ;
- identify the areas of establishing justice in family and society ;
- explain the importance of justice in bringing peace in society and state ;
- describe the teaching on self-control in the Holy Bible ;
- explain the necessity of self-control in own life ;
- explain the importance of self-control in building peaceful and orderly society ;
- establishing justice and peace in own life, family and society.

Lesson 1: Justice

Justice is a moral virtue. This is called moral virtue because whomever has this virtue becomes a man of moral character. Justice is the continuous and unshakable willingness of giving back whatever belongs to God and neighbors. So justice is of two kinds - justice toward God and justice toward man. The justice toward God is called 'religious virtue'. The justice toward man shows respect to other's rights and stirring eagerness of reconciling in human relationship. As a result, an equality is developed which is related to the welfare of person and society. The subject of justice is mentioned in the Bible many times. The deepest virtue of justice is always thinking habitually and rightfully; and maintaining honesty in behavior toward neighbor.

The special aspects of justice:

1. Becoming accurate, reasonable, proper or considerate;
2. Becoming relevant to the traditional moral regulations or following those;
3. Becoming obedient firmly to moral obligations;
4. To be faithful to the human and divine law;
5. Following honesty in maintaining good relationship with others;
6. To be honest in behavior and giving opinion and matching with reality;
7. To be honest, faithful and rational in activities.

Being firm in doing justice means doing right things for others. Justice comes from righteousness. Keeping justice in heart means enlightening oneself with human values. Justice is such an important virtue which comes from the Creator God.

Task: Record where absence of justice is seen in the society and present through posters.

Lesson 2: Teaching about Justice in the Bible

God is just. We hear about this in the Holy Bible. We hear from the Prophet Isaiah saying, "Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For, the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for Him!" (Isaiah 30: 18). We see the same thought in the Psalms. There it says, "The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love." (Psalms 33: 5). The Prophet Isaiah also says, "Listen to me, my people; hear me, my nation: The law will go out from me; my justice will become a light to the nations." (Isaiah 51: 4-5). "For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and inequity. In my faithfulness, I will reward them and make an everlasting covenant with them." (Isaiah 61: 8).

The just God raises His nation with justice i.e. according to the law. He says by comparing the people of His nation with the flock of sheep, "I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD, I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong, I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice." (Ezekiel 34: 15-16).

The distressed shall get justice from the just God. We hear from the Psalms, "I know that the LORD secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy." (Psalms 140: 12). But Jesus criticizes the Scribes and Pharisees. Because they do not obey justice. He says, "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices - mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law - justice, mercy and faithfulness." (Matthew 23: 23).

We see in the Book of Acts that, God would bring justice in the world, "In the past, God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For, he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead." (Acts 17: 30-31). So, just man has been commended in the Book of Psalms, "Blessed are they who maintain justice, who constantly do what is right." (Psalms 106: 3).

The just God wants His mankind to grow in justice. "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6: 8). God further says about the pure justice, "This is what the LORD Almighty says, "Administer justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other." (Zechariah 7: 9). God wants that His servant establishes justice in his own country, "Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations." (Matthew 12: 18). So, if none comes by hearing his call, yet alone has to follow the justice, "Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue, that you may live and inherit the land which the LORD, your God, gives you," (Deuteronomy 16:20). God also reminds all His subjects, "Cursed is he who withholds justice from the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow," (Deuteronomy 27:19).

Isaiah says, "Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless." (Isaiah10:1-2).

Task: Write a summary on justice from the examples of the Bible.

Lesson 3: Establishing Justice in Family and Society

Jesus said in the fourth saying of His Eight Beatitudes, "Blessed are those who starve and remain thirsty for righteousness, for they will be filled." (Matthew 5: 6). Righteousness means justice. Those who are hungry and thirsty for establishing righteousness, meaning there is sincere desire in those mind for establishing righteousness and try their hundred percent, they are blessed in God's eye. St. Tomas Acquinus said, "Justice is continuous willingness to ensure the right." "Worthy to have" means two-fold right. The first one is the right of man and the second one is the right of God. Jesus once said, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." (Matthew 22: 21). If we can meet these two rights, only true justice would come.

First we see how we may meet the right to God. We may take the following steps to ensure the right to God:

1 Always fulfilling God's will and working according to his will. We may know the will of God through our conscience. If we work by abiding the conscience, we may walk in God's will. If we really become thirsty for walking in God's will, the desire of obeying His will would flow from our hearts. Our Lord Jesus would always obey the will of His Father. Because He was thirsty and hungry to obey the will of the Father. Jesus said, "The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone. For, I always do what pleases Him." (John 8: 29). He also said, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work." (john 4: 34). Jesus emphasized the will of the Father while praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. He said, "While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" Pointing to his disciples, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers." (Matthew 12: 46-49).

2. The will of the Father is revealed through our daily responsibilities and duties. Those works could be little or big, we have to try our best to do those well. We may walk in the way of holiness through obeying those. Through those, we may give to the Father what He deserves.

3. God has given some virtues to us all. If we may be productive by properly flourishing those, we may give to the Father what He deserves. We may remember here the parable of Jesus. The person who got five hundred dinars, he multiplied that upto one thousand. The person got two hundred dinars also multiplied upto four hundred. So the master commended them both. But the person who got one hundred dinars, he hid those inside the hole. The master punished him. We have to increase the gifts which have been given by God. Then only we would be able to ensure His due.

Now we may discuss about the right of man. We may ensure man's right in the following ways:

1. My family, society and church where I am living, those who are living surrounding me, I can ensure their right through doing my assignments properly.
2. We may ensure their right by showing them respect and honor.
3. We may ensure others' right also by giving recognition and dignity of the faith and thoughts of others.
4. We may pay back the dues by proving ourselves as honest in our thought, word and work and by becoming open-minded men.
5. This could be through man or directly, whatever we get from God everyday, we may give back the dues to others for showing our gratitude.

Task: Write in two columns the steps you may take to build the relationship of justice with God and man.

Lesson 4: Peace as the Result of Justice

All people of all countries on earth want peace. God also wants to give peace to all people. For that, He has sent His only begotten Son into this earth. The Prophet Isaiah said before long of His birth as human, "Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past, he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future, he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along Jordan - The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian's defeat you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. For, to us a child is born, to us a son is given and the state will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9: 1-6).

We can see from the above passage that human stayed away from God because of sin. Human failed to give what was due to God, meaning human failed completely to obey and love Him. But God is just. He now shows His mercy to reduce the burdens of hardships of human.

We have learnt, the result of justice is peace. Because, we know, justice is giving whatever is due to others. We have also seen, justice is done if we give to God what is due to Him and to man what is due to him. In this way, the relationship of justice with God and man is established. Peace is the result. Now there is nothing to accuse against others. All are happy.

We have also seen in the Scripture, God Himself initiated the steps to restore the relationship as nicer with man. He Himself sent His Son. God the Son died on the cross for delivering us from the shadow of sin. In this way, He has reconciled the relationship between God and man. There is no distance any more between God and man. We now have to try so that our relationship with God never becomes destroyed. That we do not stay away from God by our sins.

Another thing we have to keep in mind is that, we must always maintain our relationship with man rightly. Whenever we give our debts back to man, then our relationship of justice with man survives. For this justice, peace prevails.

Task-1: What kind of steps may you undertake to maintain peace in your own family?

Task-2: Find out the ways of establishing peace personally and collectively through group discussion and present those findings.

Lesson 5: Self-Control

Self-control is the ability of controlling own emotions and resisting the reaction to different things. In other words, we say this as the realization of self-discipline. Perhaps some may think that man's behavior is limited by self-control. But that is not real. If this is used in wisdom and common sense, self-control may work as a strong tool for acquiring self-development and success.

Self-control is beneficial in the following ways:

1. This helps us abstain from the works of self-destruction like by drugs addiction or from the way of stepping into wrong ways;
2. This helps us in controlling our own personality and building balanced life;
3. This keeps us away from emotional activities;
4. This does not allow helpless feelings and reduces the dependence upon others;
5. By self-control, we are able to control mental and emotional feelings. This helps to bring peace in mind;
6. This helps us to keep our temper cool and to avoid the negative thoughts and feelings.;
7. Self-control strengthens our sense of self-dignity, firmness, inward strength and will power;
8. This enables us to take the responsibility of our own lives;
9. This transforms us as responsible and trustworthy men.

Although self-control has lots of benefits, there are obstacles in acquiring it. Those are:

1. Lack of proper knowledge about self-control is a big barrier;
2. Difficult and uncontrolled emotional reaction;
3. Expressing reaction by seeing only the external signs, not considering the context;
4. Lack of sense of discipline and will power;
5. Lack of will of changing and blooming ourselves;
6. Seeing self-control as means of limiting behavior.

Lesson 6: Teaching about Self-Control in the Bible

We have a valuable learning from Joseph in the Book of Genesis. Joseph's brothers were jealous of Joseph. They wanted to kill Joseph. But at last, they sold him to the merchants of Egypt. The merchants sold him to the Chief of King Pharaoh.

Joseph was given all responsibilities of the house of the Chief. Joseph was a tall and handsome youth. After a few days, his master's wife became attracted to him. She tempted him for very bad works. But Joseph always said "No." At this, the master's wife spread rumor and slander against Joseph to take revenge. As a result, Joseph was imprisoned. But Joseph was faithful in his principle.

We see that the teaching of St. Paul was completely fulfilled. St Paul said, "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside the body, but he who sins sexually, sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body." (1 Corinthians 6: 18-20).

Daniel was a young man. There were three other youths with him, Hananiah, Shadrach and Mishael. The king would send delicious food from his table for them. But they would eat vegetables but not those from King's table. They got

good health and sharp knowledge by eating only vegetables. They became the most intelligent in the whole kingdom. That was possible for them because they learnt self-control.

We can get the best example of self-control from Jesus Christ. We see from the Holy Bible that Satan took Jesus in the wilderness after His Baptism. There, He fasted for forty days and forty nights. Without any food, He became very thirsty and hungry. In that situation, Satan came to test Him. Jesus was able to overcome all tests through the power of prayer. Jesus told Satan - "Away from me, Satan." At that very moment, Satan left Him.

Task: Find out the ways, through group discussion, how the learning about self-control is applicable for the present age; and present those in posters.

Lesson 7: Self-Control in Personal and Family Life

Man cannot live alone like an island because man is a social being. He has to live in fellowship with others. Those who live with him are also social like him. So, he has to maintain social behavior. Man has to control his own emotion and feelings for living with all others in peace and discipline. He has to keep himself undisclosed to give supremacy to others.

Primarily, each person has to build relationship with other family members, friends outside family circle and different known persons. If we want to live together, we can strengthen our relationship by sharing and caring. Whoever emphasizes in giving than receiving are very much happy. Because those who favour receiving to giving, they become indebted to others. So there is no delight in heart. For that reason, one has to learn to control oneself in spite of very willingness for receiving.

Self-Control between Husband and Wife

Husband and wife start living together since the wedding day. They live together for their whole life. Both of their personalities are different. Their structure of behavior and attitude is also different. Because of these differences, there is always something to say against one another easily. But because of their commitment to live together, they control themselves and consider many things excusable. As a result, their quarreling started to lessen. In this way, their

marriage relationship becomes nice and sweet. Due to the comments made by husband and wife against one another, misunderstandings are normal. For that, sometimes they have to keep quiet. Here self-control is needed.

Self-Control among Parents and Children

One of the sweetest relationship on earth is the relationship between parents and children. But the child sees divisions and quarrellings in the family many times since he lives in one family. When the child starts to grow older, there are many changes in his body. As a result, the change happens in his mind too. Often the temperament of the children becomes rude. At this time, mother and father have to show maximum patience, they have to be very patient to the children. Father and mother have to wait for long to see growing self-confidence of the children. At this time they need self-control. For example, if the parents scold for anything wrong done by the children or beat them physically, the relationship with their parents becomes ruined. So, parents should behave patiently with their children until the children become adults and behave responsibly.

Self-Control among Brothers

Children and adolescents are naturally emotional. They argue, even engage in quarreling. They cannot understand how to talk with logic and the significance of accepting the logic easily. Whenever parents are absent, the eldest one comparatively should demonstrate himself as more responsible and patient and play the role of the parents. Then they have to be patient. At this stage the self-control is grown in them. Because, if the children fail to show self-control, the parents, teachers or any seniors rebuke them. Then children start practising self-control so that they do not have to face this type of rebuking. In this way, self-control becomes firm among them.

If any quarrelling takes place among the older ones, someone has to show self-control earlier than another. And then the situation becomes normal again.

Self-Control among the Known ones outside the Family

Each of the family members has to build friendship with the people outside the family for their study or work purpose. This is possible to speak openly or argue if necessary among the family members, but with outsiders or friends, that much is not possible. In these cases much self-control is necessary. In this way

self-control is grown in each person. For example, normally we react when parents rebuke or scold. It is not possible with the office boss; in this case, much self-control is needed.

Close relationship of one person with another depends much on self-control. The more self-control is shown in giving opinion or communication, the deeper the relationship becomes. In this way, self-honor is also grown.

Task: Write how self-control in personal life is beneficial for the society.

Lesson 8: Planting Self-Control in Heart

1. I have to discover where in my life I need to show self-control. The possible areas could be as follows:
    a. Eating
    b. Rest
    c. Conversation with others
    d. Slander
    e. Smoking
    f. Sports
    g. Behavior with babies
2. From the above aspects (e.g. anger, grudge, dissatisfaction, frustration, delight, fear) what kind of emotion should I control more?
3. What kind of thoughts and faith do push me into that kind of behavior?
4. We would think upon the following items each at a time. In this way, we would think on the subjects many times, especially in the moment when I have to show my self-control.

a. I will say silently for one or two minutes that I have control upon my thought and feeling.
b. I have strength inside me to be passionate in selected ones of my thoughts and feelings.
c. Self-control awakens internal strength inside me and helps me to win.
d. I can control myself in any moment of showing reaction in any matter.
e. I am the doer of my behavior.

f. I can control my feelings gradually.
g. God has given me the strength to lead my life.
h. Everyday the strength of controlling my thoughts and feelings is growing bit by bit.
i. I see delight in exercising self-control.

5. Now, I imagine that I am exercising self-control. I try to remember any case when I failed to show self-control in the past. Now, I imagine that I am able to show self-control in the same incident.
6. If I practise this properly, the power of self-control would increase. This is a most important step of planting self-control in my heart.

Self-control is so important to us that, we may be able to overcome frightening, addiction, and unexpected behavior. With this, the relationship with man grows, patience and endurance also grow. In this way, we may win over big situation in life, great acquiring becomes possible and the life becomes full of delight.

Task- 1: Find out the ways how you may plant self-control in your heart and note down in your paper.

Task- 2: Determine and present what are the ways of planting self-control in the lives of those who are lacking.

Exercise

Fill in the blanks

a. The justice toward God is called ___.
b. The Just God raises His nation with ___or properly.
c. "I will look after my sheep with ___".
d. ___ will is also revealed through our daily responsibilities and duties.
e. As human, we all are ___.

Match column 'A' with column 'B'

A	B
1. Implanting justice in heart	• means that the poor would get justice
2. We through our conscience	• the source of our life
3. All of us have been given	• was jealous upon Joseph
4. The Lord Jesus is	• may know God's will
5. The brothers of Joseph	• some gift by God

Multiple choice questions

1. What is the meaning of righteousness?
   a. Peace b. Love
   c. Self-control d. Justice

2. Why does God call some of His people as His own children?
   a. for bringing peace in the lives of the people b. to show mercy to the poor
   c. Because they bear persecution d. Because they honor people

Read the following text and answer questions no. 3 and 4

There was a teacher named Benedict in Duttapara Primary School. He served as teacher in that school for a long time. Suddenly he became ill with a severe disease but the headmaster asked him to leave the school without paying the savings of his provident fund. When the priest of the parish came to know the matter, he called Benedict and paid all his money including the provident fund.

3. Which virtue was shown by the priest?
   a. Justice b. Mercy
   c. Compassion d. Sympathy

4. For the work of the priest, God would-
   i. look after him.
   ii. embrace always.
   iii. offer bigger responsibility.

Which One is Correct?
   a. i b. i and ii
   c. ii and iii d. i, ii and iii

Creative questions

1. Ruma is from a poor family. Since her family condition is bad, she took a job as maidservant at a house. The house-wife would leave money and precious gold jewelries openly in front of Ruma to test her. But Ruma never touched those things. The house-wife found that Ruma did not have any greed toward those things. Even Ruma never tasted any good food available in that house. She would take those foods which were left for her. Being very pleased, the house-wife proposed to donate enough money to build a nice house at Ruma's home. Ruma thanked the house-wife for her nice proposal but she did not receive that donation.

   a. What does a man expecting to gain the whole world lose?

b. Explain the way of getting peace.

c. Explain in light of the textbook about which Christian virtues are proven through the behavior of Ruma.

d. "Ruma would be able to cloth Christ as her new clothes" - Do you agree with this statement? Give your opinion.

2. Robi Palma is an ideal union council member. He performs the development works of the area, expand education, control drugs, etc. skillfully. He has never given shelter to any wrong thing. He never thinks of his own popularity for doing justice. In his area, there is a family where two brothers always quarrel for many issues. The disagreement rose on the issue of equal distribution of their paternal land property. The elder is not willing to give equal right since the younger one is step-brother. The member Robi called a meeting to resolve the matter. He told the elder one, "You would not receive enough blessings from God if you do not give equal portion of land to your younger brother."

    a. Where do we learn the lesson of self-control from?

    b. Why is establishing justice important before establishing peace?

    c. Discuss the quality of Robi Palma by which he played a prominent role in restoring relationship between two brothers.

    d. Do you think that the family bond of two brothers would be endangered? Give your reasons.

Answer briefly

1. What is the meaning of Justice?
2. What does 'Owing to God' mean?
3. What do you mean by self-control?

Essay type questions

1. Describe the teaching on justice from the Bible.
2. Explain the importance of self-control in your own life.
3. Explain the importance of self-control in building a peaceful and disciplined society.

Chapter Ten

Theotonius Amol Ganguly as the Servant of God

We are going to discuss the life of a great man in this chapter. It is true that great men were very much like us. Many of them came of very simple families too. However, they have been esteemed in the history of mankind by virtue of their knowledge and intelligence along with the blessings of parents and teachers. So it is said that "Whatever the date of such action, be better"; it means human is not liable for birth but for deeds. Human beings become famous in the history because of good qualities. We are inspired by the biography of these great souls and become active to culture our own talent and virtue. You have certainly heard the names of great kings and emperors, heroes, poets and literateures, writers, scientists and inventors in the history.

You have also learnt about some priests and priestesses and dreamt of better future by studying their life-history. In fact, student life is the proper time of dreaming and of achieving target. And all of your well-wishers and teachers expect the same from you. Let us try to know about a person who had extraordinary pedantry by virtue of his merit although he was born in a simple family. He became immortal in the history of Bangladesh Christian Church as a noble person because of his prudent talent. He is Theotonius Amol Ganguly.

At the end of the chapter, we will be able to:

- describe the childhood of Archbishop Ganguly ;
- describe the priestly life of Archbishop Ganguly ;
- describe the role of Ganguly as Bishop and Archbishop in the history of Bangladesh Christian Church ;
- describe his contribution to education and building youths ;
- explain the role of Ganguly in the Liberation War ;
- talk about the humanitarian work Ganguly would do.

Theotonius Amol Ganguly, the Servant of God

Lesson 1: Birth and Childhood of Archbishop Ganguly

In the beginning of the twentieth century, a new star rose in the history of Bangladesh Christian Church. A child was born in a family of village Hasnabad under Nawabgonj Thana in the district of Dhaka. The second son of Nicolas Gomes and Romana Gomes was born on 18th February 1920. He was Baptized as an infant at Hasnabad. In Sacred Rany Rosary Church on 26 February after eight days of his birth, he was named Theotonius, nick name Amol. Theotonius Amol was second of the three sons of Nicolas and Romana Gomes. The eldest son was Xavier and the youngest was Bimol. Later, they took the name Ganguly changing their family title.

The parents of Theotonius called him Theton affectionately. On the other hand, his grandmother called her grand child Teton for his brilliance as a little boy. Day by day, the success of the name given by the grandmother started to reveal in the brilliance of Theotonius. All were attracted especially by his loyal behavior and success in study from his childhood.

Nicolas and Romana used to have a very happy family life with three sons. Nicolas was in Calcutta for his job and his wife stayed in the village home at Hasnabad with her three sons and mother in law. Romana was very careful for the education of her children. She emphasized religious, moral and humanitarian sides along with academic curriculum of the school. The three brothers were very brilliant and loyal to parents and teachers. They all studied at Bandura Holy Cross High School governed by the Holy Cross Brothers. Romana herself used to join the holy mass everyday and encouraged her sons to do the same.

They all used to join the prayer regularly. Theotonius received of laying hand at Hasnabad Church on 9 June 1930. In this way the three brothers spent their student life in a hale and hearty environment by the grace and affection of their seniors. The elder brother Xavier completed his school education at Bandura Holy Cross High School and went to his father in Calcutta. There he took degree in medicine and started practising. The youngest brother Bimol went to Dhaka for study at a college after completing his matriculation from Bandura High School.

Task: Write about an ideal family of your area, from which at least one person served the church as a priest or teacher.

Lesson 2: Entrance into Seminary and Ordination in Priesthood

The parents of each family bring up their children with love and affection and dream of their future too. Nicolas and Romana also dreamt about their three sons in the same way. But their dream about Amol was a bit different. They were delighted to observe the eagerness of Amol for attending the holy mass everyday and to play the role of a servant. The parents expected solely that their young child would become a priest by attending the mass regularly and be in touch with the priests. So they dreamt of Amol that, their son would be ordained as a priest some day and would work for church. And it was found that Amol's eagerness was moving towards it.

Amol got himself admitted to Bandura Holy Cross High School after completing class three from Hasnabad Mission Primary School. Amol stood first in every class at Bandura School because of his excellent merit. He desired to enter Bandura Little Flower St. Teresa Seminary while he was in class seven. But special recommendation was necessary from Local Pastor-Priest for the entrance into seminary. The Pastor-Priest of Hasnabad Sacred Rany Rosary Church knew that Amol attended the mass regularly and served as pulpit attendee. So he became very pleased and strongly recommended Amol to enter the Seminary. Thus Amol joined Little Flower Seminary in January 1937 with the recommendation of the Pastor-Priest and blessings and permission of his parents. Little Flower Seminary and Holy Cross High School were closely situated. The school was led by Holy Cross Brothers and the directors of the seminary were Holy Cross Priests.

The foundation of education and priest life of Amol was going on well as a student of school and seminary. He was known to all as a meritorious student. He also participated in playing drama, singing, playing football and handball, etc. in school and seminary alongside his study. Because of his excellent behavior, personality, reputation in these fields, he was well known to all. The director of the seminary, Head teacher of the school, the brothers and the teachers were all charmed with his merit, thoughtfulness and polished behavior. He was very careful in following the rules of the seminary. The classmates and other students of the school followed Amol as a model person for his honesty, nobility and modesty. He passed matriculation (presently SSC) examination in 1940 from Bandura Holy Cross High School with name and fame.

Lesson 3: Joining of Father Ganguly into Congregation of the Holy Cross

There was no higher seminary in the then East Bengal for preparatory study for priest life except Bandura Little Flower Seminary. So Theotonius Amol was sent to St. Albert Seminary in Ranchi of North India in July 1940 for study of preparatory ordination of Priesthood with the direction of church authority. He studied Juniorate Course for 2 years and later on Philosophy in higher seminary up to 1943. There he studied Divine Theory from 1943 to June 1946. He was always known to all as a meritorious, humble, noble, God-lover and prayerful man. Many people treated Amol as a close friend to them being attracted by his character and personality. After completing 6 years long study at St. Albert seminary of Ranchi, Theotonius Ganguly was ordained as a priest on 26 June in 1946 at the age of 26 only.

Theotonius Amol Ganguly returned to Dhaka after being ordained. He was welcomed by his own Hasnabad Parish. Then he was appointed Assistant Director of Bandura Little Flower Seminary and was assigned to teach theological subjects to the seminarians. He gladly accepted and performed that responsibility.

Congregation of the Holy Cross was established in France in 1835. The devotees such as priests, brothers and sisters of this Congregation came to Bangladesh (the then East Bengal) in 1853. From that time, they started their task of preaching religion. They preached the ideology of Christ in religion province of Dhaka, Chittagong, Mymensingh and Sylhet respectively. They set up a good number of schools, colleges and technical institutes too. Father Theotonius Amol Ganguly saw the priests, brothers and sisters of the Holy Cross Society

working in parishes and educational institutes from his boyhood. Their devoted life and service to mankind inspired Amol to be a priest. He wanted to work in God's Heavenly Garden with the call of God as a priest like missionaries also. Besides, the unified life of the members of the Holy Cross Congregation attracted him very much. But the authority did not permit Amol to join the Congregation of the Holy Cross in spite of his willingness. Because, the church authority was very cautious in increasing the numbers of theo-provincial priests. So, he was told that if anyone after being ordained as priest wanted to join the Congregation of the Holy Cross, would be permitted.

Father Ganguly carried out the responsibility for one year at Little Flower Seminary. Then the Archbishop of Dhaka Archdiocese sent him to Notre Dame University at Indiana State of the USA for higher education. There Father Theotonius Ganguly studied Philosophy and earned M.A. Degree. He achieved his Ph.D. in 1951 from the same university. He decided to join the Holy Cross Congregation at the time of studying in the university. He entered into the Novitiate in 1951 after getting the permission of Dhaka Archbishop. After the preparation through divine sacrifice, Father Ganguly took three vows apathy, obedience and celibacy of ascetic life according to the Constitution of the Congregation of the Holy Cross and was involved in the Congregation of the Holy Cross.

Task: Share about your own calling with each other through group discussion.

Lesson 4: Working Life of Father Ganguly as Missionary

The disciples sent by Jesus for preaching were called apostles or missionaries. The church has been continuing that work of the missionaries even today. The works performed through sending are called sent-work. Some of the sent-works Father Ganguly was engaged in are mentioned here:

a. Father Ganguly as a teacher:

Father Ganguly was appointed as a Professor of St. Gregory's College at Laxmibazar in old Dhaka on his return after completing study in the USA in 1952. He was offered a welcome at the college premises in the evening of 26th October. From then, he started to teach Logic.

Father Ganguly took much delight in teaching. He loved the students cordially. He always took preparation before the class and taught the subject matter very clearly to the students. He had great love and sympathy for his students. He called all the students by name as he could memorise their names. So the students treated him as one of their own and respected him deeply.

Father Ganguly arranged various co-curricular activities for the students along with his teaching. He engaged the students in many creative activities so that their learning would not be confined to the textbook only. With the initiatives of Ganguly, the students of St. Gregory College staged a drama on 9th August, 1953 on the occasion of anniversary of St. Lawrence who was the adopting Father of Archbishop Grener.

St. Gregory's College was shifted from Laxmibazar to Motijheel in 1954. Father Ganguly played important role in construction of the new college building. The name of the college was changed as Notre Dame College after shifting to the new place. Father Richard Tim CSC assisted Father Ganguly in different works especially in debate competition. The college authority was very pleased with the efficiency and eagerness of Father Ganguly and they handed over some responsibilities to him. According to the college record up to the end of 1958, Father Ganguly served the following responsibilities:

(a) Director of Studies, (b) Director of Religious studies, (c) Spiritual Director of Legend of Mary and editor, publisher of Bangla bulletin "Mukur", (d) Member of House Council of Holy Cross Fathers. Besides, he worked as a question setter in Latin language of Matriculation and Intermediate Examination under Dhaka University.

b. Father Ganguly as Principal and Vice Principal of the College

Father Ganguly was appointed as the temporary Vice Principal of Notre Dame College on 1 November 1958. He was assigned to work as Assistant Superior of CSC Fathers and as the chief of guarding discipline of the college. He got the responsibility to publish a college magazine named 'Harvest' in the next year. He carried out these responsibilities with sincerity and proved his merit. He became the permanent Vice Principal of the college in 1959. Later, he was appointed as the temporary the Principal on 12th April 1960 and he got permanent position of Principal of the college on 30th April in the same year. Father Ganguly was the first native Principal of renowned Notre Dame College.

c. Father Ganguly as Pastor:

The weekly holidays of Notre Dame College were Saturday and Sunday. Father Ganguly along with other fathers involved themselves in church ministry during holidays and off time of the college routine. He helped the pastors and priests of other parishes in their service. If anyone became ill or went on leave or went to yearly quiet meditation, he worked as proxy for them. Father Ganguly also assisted the local parishes before Easter or Christmas, the quiet meditation and seminar of local people, devotees, Katekhist and teachers as well. He was well-versed in these activities and was very popular for his excellent presentation. There was no good road communication at that time. Most of the time, people had to travel on foot, or ride on horse or bicycle. Father Ganguly worked as pastor travelling to villages with pleasure although it was very troublesome.

d. Contribution of Father Ganguly to Youth Building:

Father Ganguly got much pleasure in pastor activities. So, he laboured hard to do these works. He encouraged and inspired the students of Notre Dame College to take part in co-curricular activities alongsides class-room activities. He used to counsel the students and guardians for different problems at different time. He tried to make all understand that youths are the future of society and church and so it is needed to take special care of them.

Father Ganguly tried to make the students and youths understand how to form the moral character strong and steady. He always provided time for the parents and guardians of students at the time of their utter difficulties. He listened to them patiently and gave directions. He led the quiet meditation for hostel students and delivered lecture or conference on spiritual matters.

To help the youths for moral and spiritual development, Father Ganguly made a plan of his own and presented a proposal in the meeting of the diocesan pastor and priests held at Ramna St. Merry's Cathedral on 15 December 1954. A good number of meetings and discussions were held to implement the proposals and as a result, youth building activities were speeded up.

Lesson 5: Ganguly in the position of Bishop at first and Archbishop later

Father Ganguly came to know from a letter of the Pope Zohan XXIII about his nomination for the position of Bishop only after four days of his joining as the Principal of Notre Dame College. The news was spread all over the country rapidly. There was delight and pleasure everywhere to learn that the first Bangali had been nominated as Bishop. However, the news was not unexpected. Many people thought that Father Ganguly might get bigger responsibility of the church observing his extra ordinary human qualities, efficiency in work and administration, humble behavior, deeper spiritualism, educational qualifications and willingness for pastor activities. So, everyone was grateful to God having the right person in the right place. The news of Father Ganguly as Bishop was published in the 'Pakistan Observer' and in a Roman newspaper named 'Observatore Romano'. It was also informed that Cardinal Agaginian himself from Rome would come to Dhaka and ordain Theotonius Ganguly as Bishop on 7th October. Innumerous priests, brothers, sisters, Christian devotees and other guests from home and abroad gathered at Ramna Cathedral on the day of ordination. The installation ceremony of Bishop was held gorgeously.

Ganguly, the First Bengalee Bishop

A grand welcome was paid to newly ordained Ganguly from different institutions including Notre Dame College and from all parishes of Dhaka archdiocese. Then, he started to serve as Assistant Bishop of Dhaka Archdiocese. At that time, tortures rose to grow in different ways on the Mandis of

Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Sherpur, Netrokona, Kishoregonj, Tangail etc. Archbishop Lawrence Grener, CSC protested this and criticized the Pakistan Government. As a result, the government of Pakistan stopped renewal of Archbishop Grener's visa and compelled him to leave Pakistan in November 1965.

Ganguly in the Position of Archbishop

Archbishop Grener was hopeful that the govt. of Pakistan would permit him to come back. So, the honorable Pope ordered him not to resign from the post of Archbishop of Dhaka. In the meantime, subsequent Archbishop Ganguly started to work as Administrator of Dhaka Archdiocese. Finally, Archbishop Grener submitted his resignation to the Pope on 3 November 1967 having no possibility to return to this country. From that day, Archbishop Ganguly was positioned as the permanent Archbishop of Dhaka Archdiocese. But his installation ceremony was held on 21st January 1968. The new waking of local church of Dhaka Archdiocese started to function smoothly under his dynamic leadership. That waking began to focus in many ways. The number of local respondents increased rapidly. The local church was advanced in many ways under his perfect leadership.

The foreign missionaries led the church for many years in this country. Their contributions to establish the church here was appreciable. But after the regime of Vatican Congregation especially with the effect of Liberation war in 1971, the expectation and necessity of local parishoners was felt more. As a result, the role of the local Archbishop to advance the church became more challenging. Father Ganguly could not hurt anyone as he was very simple and humble. He never became angry with anyone. On the other hand, he could bear the negative criticism silently. For this reason, many people thought him to be weak and hurt his mind creating factions.

Lesson 6: Role of Archbishop Ganguly in the Liberation War of Bangladesh

All the patriotic citizens feel proud of the history of great Liberation war of Bangladesh. Archbishop Ganguly played a very courageous role during those days of war and national crisis. The People of East Bengal with the call of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman fought against the Pakistan occupation force for long nine months and achieved the independence

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of Bangladesh. But the nation had to pay a lot for it. Many unarmed Bengalees died at the hands of Pakistan force and many of them became homeless losing all assets being the victims of Pakistan force's torture. Many people had to take shelter in refugee camps because of the raping, looting, killing and inhuman oppressions of the Pakistan force towards the Bangalees. During this time of crisis, Archbishop Ganguly sent an urgent note to all priests, brothers and sisters of Bangladesh to help the distressed refugees by providing shelters and trying to minimize their utmost sufferings to their best.

Archbishop Ganguly went to Pakistan during liberation war with an appeal to the government of Pakistan to stop oppressions and tortures inflicted upon the armless mass of the then East Pakistan. But the government of Pakistan became furious towards the Christians. With the order of the Pope Paul VI, Father Ganguly sent letters to the priests of all parishes making a call for repentance and atonement for the heinous crime happened in East Pakistan. Many missions provided shelters to the refugees and medical treatment for the injured with the instruction of Archbishop Ganguly.

On the occasion of 5th World Peace Day, Archbishop Ganguly arranged a joint welcome ceremony for both Bangladesh and Indian Army on behalf of the church on 2nd January 1972. A number of dignitaries, members of the Cabinet, Army official of this state along with Brigadier R.N. Mistra of Indian Army were present on that occasion. Archbishop Theotonius Ganguly welcomed all to the occasion and read out a written speech highlighting the 5th World Peace Day. In his speech Archbishop Ganguly said, "I congratulate the Indian Army and our freedom fighters from my heart with deep respect and gratitude. Because you have restored comfort and peace in our Bangladesh. So we are welcoming you all as our guests today with overflowing pleasure. How could we forget those who have sacrificed their lives generously to bring justice and peace in our country? Our sincere prayer, may merciful God adorn them with due reward".

Lesson 7: Journey to Eternity

A humble servant to God, an ever-active worker, the first native Bishop of Dhaka Archdiocese and subsequently Archbishop-Theotonius Ganguly fell into sudden illness at about 4 am. on 2nd September 1977. At that time, Sister Proggya, SMRA and Father Charles Gillespie CSC were present in Archbishop

House. Archbishop Theotonius Ganguly experienced severe chest pain and Sister Proggya along with Father Gillespie rushed for Dr. Jaman Clinic at Moghbazar carrying him by a car. Archbishop Ganguly breathed his last before he was taken down from the car. After diagnosis, the doctor on duty declared that Archbishop Ganguly died of heart attack.

At the death of Archbishop Ganguly, a great mourning began in the Christian society all over the country. The Bishops of all parishes started to come to Dhaka immediately.Countless devotees gathered in Dhaka to have a look at their dearest Archbishop before the final departure. Next day, a great mass was held during the funeral at Ramna Cathedral on 3rd September. The then Bishop Michael Atul D'Rozario, CSC from Khulna Parish played the role of Chief Priest in the funeral and Father Tomas Zimmerman, CSC delivered an exhortation in the mass. Then the dead body of Archbishop Ganguly was buried in the front lawn of Ramna Archbishop Building.

Lesson 8: Archbishop Ganguly as God's Servant

Archbishop Theotonius Amol Ganguly, CSC the first-ever Bengalee bishop and subsequently Archbishop of the Church of Bangladesh had child like simplicity and politeness as he was meritorious in study and had the highest degree of the University. He was such a person whom Jesus called happy and perfect in his advising address held on the hill. He was very successful as a man, as a Christian devotee, as a priest and as a top leader of the Church. He had no pride in spite of his great pedantry. On the other hand, he was a man of great heart, pious, kind, polite, humble, peace-seeker, just, prudent and a man of conscience. He was above all lust and greed. He was dear to all irrespective of race, cast and creed. Whoever had come close to him, was fortunate to be the living witness of him.

The person who has those qualities according to the belief and learning of Christianity is ranked as devotee or saint. In view of this tradition, the Catholic Church offered a respectable title "The servant of God" to the deceased Archbishop Ganguly as the preliminary step to be ranked as a devotee or saint". He might be in the saint class in near future. Hundreds of devotees gather at his graveyard throughout the year especially on his death anniversary. They do not pray for him rather pray to him. The most Reverend Paulinu's Costa, the ex-Archbishop presented the issue of increasing devotion for Arcgbishop Ganguly to the Congregation of Saints under the Honourable Pope on the

request of the mass people. At the same time, he appealed to begin the process of including Archbishop Ganguly for the Canonization of sainthood. The Holy office of Rome conferred the title 'the Servant of God' to Archbishop Ganguly on his 29th death anniversary held on 2 September 2006. A tribunal was formed for classifying "The Servant of God Archbishop Ganguly" into the Beautification. This committee was assigned to proceed the Beatification process. We pray to God that He would glorify this devoted saint in heaven and everywhere on earth.

By this time a number of institutions have been named after the name of deceased Archbishop Ganguly as a symbol of respect and gratitude for him. For example, the 6 storied building of Notre Dame College was named as "Ganguly Bhaban" in 1995, the only Teachers' Training College established and governed by the Catholic Church at Mohammadpur St. Joseph Higher Secondary School premises in 2009 was named as "Archbishop T.A. Ganguly Teachers' Training College".

Exercise

Fill in the blanks

a. Theotonius Amol Ganguly received the Sacrament of Laying Hands in __ A. D.
b. For entering into the seminary, the special __ from the pastor-priest was necessary.
c. The disciples sent by Christ for preaching the message were called ___.
d. Like the apostles and disciples, Father Ganguly was also a ___.
e. Father ___was involved from the very beginning of Notre Dame College.

Match column 'A' with column 'B'

A	B
1. God sent Theotonius Amol Ganguly	• the authority of the church was very careful.
2. For multiplying national priests	• as the chief of the church.
3. The Entering into the Little Flower Teresa Seminary was	• in 1937.
	• the work of sending
4. The work of the church is	• in 1940.
5. Archbishop Ganguly among the Bengalis was	• earned the glory of becoming the first Bishop.

Multiple choice questions

1. In which year, the Archbishop Ganguly was born?
   a. 1918 b. 1920
   c. 1921 d. 1922
2. What was the reason for the church to bestow the Archbishop Ganguly the title of "God's Servant?"
   a. Cleverness b. Prudence
   c. Restlessness d. faithfulness

Read the following text and answer questions no 3 and 4

Sumon is a meritorious student. Since his boyhood, he has been showing strong interest for study. He goes to school regularly. He completes the class work and home work properly. He participates in the competitions of music, acting, drama, delivering speech and debate programs.

3. The quality of Archbishop Ganguly seen in Sumon is
   i. Sense of discipline
   ii. Prudence
   iii. Cooperation

Which one from the followings is correct?

a. i b. i and ii
c. i and iii d. ii and iii

4. Sumon through his qualities may be-
   a. established in life b. friendly
   c. the person of everybody's discussion d. the person of compassion

Creative questions

1. Sharon is a social worker. She went to the district of Panchogor and noticed that, the children at their age of 15-23 years walk independently. They neither attend at church prayer nor other religious meeting. They are mostly found in receiving drug, making fun, joke, collecting tolls, quarreling, etc. She founded an association for their development. She organized seminars every month for the moral development of the children and taught them the significance of church prayer, family prayer and solitary meditation. Sometimes she also makes arrangements for solitary meditation. Through these, the children were able to find the real path of their lives.

   a. Who is the first Bengali Archbishop of Bangladesh?
   b. Why did the Archbishop Grener return to his homeland?
   c. By which qualities of T. A. Ganguly, was Sharon inspired to do her works?
   d. Draw comparisons between the activities of Sharon and T. A. Ganguly.

2. John was born in a poor family. He struggled from his very childhood for his growing. He had extraordinary merit and talents. He has given much encouragement, help and cooperation to the students by his teaching profession. Then he established an organization named "Welfare Association". The goal of the association was to offer free medical assistance and to give small loans. He continued preaching alongside his work. Through this, each of the youths, men and women was benefitted. The Christian Society was pleased for his work. They selected him as the chief of "Christian Oikya Parishod."

a. In which year, was Father Ganguly appointed as the Principal of Notre Dame College?
b. Why couldn't the unfavorable climate dominate Father Ganguly?
c. Which quality of Father Ganguly is seen in John? Explain.
d. The Christian Church can see T. A.Ganguly in John - do you agree with the statement? Give your own opinion.

Answer briefly

1. Why did the church give Bishop Theotonius the title "the Servant of God?"
2. Write about the childhood of the Archbishop Ganguly.
3. Why did the Archbishop Grener have to leave the country?

Essay type questions

1. Discuss how Father Ganguly entered into the Congregation of the Holy Cross.
2. Discuss on the contribution of Father Ganguly in the expansion of education and in building of youths.
3. Record the role of the Archbishop Ganguly in the Liberation War.

THE END

2025 Academic Year

Eight–Christian Religion Studies

অন্তরে যারা পবিত্র–ধন্য তারা।

–বাইবেল